WESTERN CIVILISATION

ISLAM AND MUSLIMS

(Revised and Enlarged Edition)

By

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Translated from the Urdu

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FOREWORD

ALMOST all the Islamic countries, today, are in the grip of an acute intellectual crisis. Or, shall we say, an unrelenting battle of ideas and ideals is taking place throughout the Muslim World. It can aptly be described as a clash between the Islamic and the Western concepts of life, values and traditions. The past history of the Islamic countries, the indestructible attachment of Muslim masses everywhere to Islam, the lofty ideals which inspired them in their struggles for freedom and the spirit in which these struggles were fought and won and the sovereignty of their lands restored—all these things demand that Islamic values and concepts alone should have a claim on their leadership and only the way of life that Islam preached should be followed in them. On the other hand, the intellectual make-up, education and upbringing and personal and political interests of the ruling classes in Muslim countries require that Western ideals and forms of life should be pushed forward and the Muslim masses made to walk in the foot-steps of the West, changing or brushing aside, as the need be, whatever religious considerations, social attributes and national customs and law and tradition came in the way or impeded their advance. In brief, the Islamic countries ought to be gradually, but surely and deliberately, cast into the mould of modern Western Civilisation.

Many of the Muslim countries have already convered a number of stages of their journey towards the West and have either attained their goal or come very close to it while some are still, so to speak, standing at the crossroads. But the writing on the wall is there for anyone to see : their ultimate absorption

into the Western pattern of thought and life is only a matter of time.

As far as I think, this is the biggest and most vital problem before the Islamic World at the present time. The problem is neither hypothetical nor imaginary but very real. The internal weaknesses of the Muslim countries coupled with the unrivalled ascendancy of the Western Civilisation and the irrefutable material and political superiority of the Western Powers have set it up like an enormous question mark before the entire World of Islam. The problem has got to be tackled, sooner or later, by all the Muslim countries without exception. Without finding an answer to it none of them can aspire to make any real progress. What attitude are these countries going to adopt towards Western Civilisation? What path will they choose to integrate their traditional social structures with contemporary life in order to meet the mounting strains and pressures of the modern age? How much of courage and wisdom can they muster to cope with the challenge of the Western way of life? On the answers to these questions depends the place the Muslim countries are going to occupy in the world of tomorrow. On them also depends the future of Islam in them and the measure of their usefulness to its eternal message in these eventful times.

The need was felt for a long time of a historical assessment of the whole question, of taking stock of the work done so far in an objective and dispassionate manner, and of indicating where did the correct and balanced path of progress for the Islamic World lie that could enable it to march in step with the ever-moving caravan of life without losing its own identity. (It should be borne in mind that for Muslims only the observance of Islamic precepts and programme of life is not enough but leadership and guidance and study and analysis of the material universe also form an essential part of their mission on the earth). In the existing times all the Muslim countries, particularly the newly-independent ones, stand in need of such a critical study and advice.

With this object in view I had begun to write a detailed

paper in Arabic last year. The paper quickly grew into a full volume which was published in 1963 under the title of *Maquiful A' lam-i-Islami Itejahal Hazaaratil Gharbiyah* (The Attitude of the World of Islam Towards Western Civilisation). Fortunately, it was received with warmth and encouragement in the Arab countries and several of their leading scholars and publicists wrote to me personally to convey their appreciation. The book was later rendered into Urdu by Mohammad el-Hasani, Editor of *El- Ba'ath el-Islami*, of Lucknow. On going through the Urdu manuscript I felt that it needed revision and improvement. Several new aspects of the problem had come before me, and, in the meantime, I had also been able to lay my hands on fresh sources of information. The tour of Europe had given me the opportunity to see, at first hand, the major centres of Western Civilisation about which so much had been said in the book. I also made use of the material available in the British Museum and other well-known libraries in the European countries I visited. The result was that innumerable additions and alterations had to be made in the manuscript till the Urdu version, from which the present English translation has been done, became almost double in volume of the original work in Arabic.

It is hoped that the English edition of the book will also be read with the same interest in lands where English is spoken or understood as the original Arabic book was in the Middle East.

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Nadwatul Ulema,
Lucknow (India)
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CHAPTER ONE

THE NEUTRAL OR NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF SOME COUNTRIES TOWARDS WESTERN CIVILISATION

TOWARDS the middle of the Nineteenth Century the Islamic World was called upon to face a grave and intriguing problem, on its approach to which hung the very question of its survival as a free and self-respecting unit in the world and possessing a distinctive personality of its own.

It was the problem posed by a civilisation that was fresh, energetic and ambitious and overflowing with the potentialities of expansion and progress—we mean, the Western Civilisations which deserved to be ranked among the mightiest civilisation known to the history of mankind. This civilisation, in fact, was the natural outcome of forces and impulsions that had been at work for a long time and were waiting for a suitable opportunity to give expression to themselves in this form.

The World of Islam, particularly, was threatened by this new development for after the retreat of the ancient religions from the domain of practical life it was left to Islam alone to serve as the champion of the moral and spiritual cause and the custodian and caretaker of the human society. Rich and fertile lands, large and extensive countries fell within its orbit. It was, therefore, natural for the challenge of the materialistic and technological Western Civilisation to be directed largely towards the Muslim World.

Mixed Civilisation

Western Civilisation presented a curious mixture of divergent intellectual and spiritual and social and economic forms and concepts. It bore the imprint of all the various experiences through which the Western nations had passed at the various stages of their long-drawn process of evolution. It was, in the main, the logical upshot of the advancement of human knowledge, specially in physical sciences and technology and had grown into a complex synthesis of diverse factors and components about which no sweeping opinion could be possible.

The constituents that had gone into the making of Western Civilisation were good as well as bad, true as well as false, and beneficial as well as harmful. These included solid facts of knowledge and self-evident truths as well as hypothetical surmises and groundless presumptions. There were found among them intellectual conclusions that were the fruits of profound study and observation as also those which could only be described as immature, slipshod and puerile. Some of these ingredients like the experimental sciences transcended the barriers of race, geography and politics and were universal in their scope while others were typically Western, both in form and character, and bore exclusively the stamp of Western social and historical experience. And, then, there were attributes that were deeply related to religious truths and spiritual convictions as well as those which had nothing to do with religion or religious morality.

The complex nature of Western civilisation has made the problem thrown up by it more important and intricate. It has added vastly to the difficulties of the Islamic World and confronted the genius of its leaders and philosophers with a challenge which is both urgent and baffling.

Negative Attitude

The problem can be tackled only in three ways. Firstly, there is the negative method by which we mean that the Muslim World should reject Western Civilisation *in toto* and refuse to have anything to do with it without caring to

enquire what is good in it and what is bad. Or, that it may adopt the attitude of indifference and neutrality and take no sides, either of support or of opposition. The Islamic World should strictly refrain from making use of the fruits of culture and civilisation offered by the West including even such branches of knowledge in which the Western people enjoy a monopoly, as for instance, the material sciences. It should regard these sciences as forbidden and stay aloof also from the scientific inventions, machines and other necessities of life that owe their origin to the West.

Place in the Shariat

Such an attitude, however, can result only in the further backwardness of the Muslim World and its total isolation from the main current of time. It is bound to cut asunder the Islamic countries from the rest of the world and reduce them into so many islands, walled-in and detached from life. It will, in short, amount to going against the dictates of human nature which is neither correct nor possible.

To strike the posture of negation or rejection will, in other words, be patently foolish and short-sighted. Such a frame of mind always cripples the natural potentialities of a man or community, as the case may be. It, also, runs contrary to the spirit of Islam. Being a 'natural' religion, Islam lays a great stress on the pursuit of knowledge and urges mankind to take the fullest advantage of all the useful branches of learning. It calls upon its followers to defend the faith and to build up their strength so much as to act as a deterrent to the wicked ambitions of the enemies of truth and other self-seeking adventurers. The Quran says:

> "In the creation of the heavens and the earth and (in) the rotation of night and day are tokens (of His Sovereignty) for men of understanding. Such as remember Allah standing, sitting and reclining, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and the earth (and say): 'Our Lord, Thou createth not this in vain. Glory be to Thee. Preserve us

from the doom of Fire."

(—Aal-i-Imran: 190-191)

"Make ready for them all thou can'st of (armed) force and of horses tethered, that thereby ye may dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy."

(El-Anfal: 60)

Similarly a Tradition of the Holy Prophet reads: Knowledge is the lost property of a Muslim. Wherever it may be found, it is his.[1]

Islam insists upon man being the vicegerent of God in the world to whom the earth and the heavens, the sun and the moon, and the day and the night have been subjugated. God has provided man with everything he stands in need of, or is likely to, in the course of his earthly journey. For instance, the Quran declares it to be one of the favours of God upon mankind to have created iron "wherein is mighty power and many uses" for it.[2] By his own example the sacred Prophet taught his followers the importance of military preparedness in the affairs of the world. When the city of Medina was besieged by the pagans, during the battle of Ahzaab, he dug the trenches with his own hands to keep the invaders at bay after the manner of the Iranians. After the Holy Prophet, the leaders and jurists of the Muslim World followed the same course. They kept pace with time and tried to steal a march over other nations in the cultivation of strength and the production and use of armaments and in other branches of positive endeavour. Sometimes, they also came to function as leaders of the world in these matters.

A country which seeks to ignore the challenge of Modern Civilisation by withdrawing into its shell and shutting its mind to the mighty changes that are taking place around it has no future in the present context of things. It cannot hope to preserve even its domestic peace and security for any length of time. It will be torn incessantly by internal discords, revolts and uprisings.

1. *Tirmizi*
2. Quran: *El-Hadeed*: 25

Such a nation will be courting misfortune and disaster for the net result of following a course which is opposed to the law of nature is nothing but frustration and ruin. Human nature never looks back, nor does it tolerate a vacuum. It is always looking ahead, moving forward. It neither tires nor halts nor gives way to despair. It never rests on its laurels and its appetite is never satiated. It is always on the look-out for the fresh and the new. Adventure is in its blood; it believes in constant struggle and relentless endeavour. All the time it is in quest of advancement and supremacy, of new and newer glory.

The attitude of rejection and withdrawal is emphatically futile. It is bound, ultimately, to fail. It cannot confer immunity against the mounting pressures of Modern Civilisation to the country which adopts it. It cannot hold back from it the tide of Western Civilisation which will at first seep into it through the crevices and then sweep over it once the breach has been made.

Consequences of Isolation

Whenever an Islamic country has tried to seek protection from the onslaught of Modern Civilisation by keeping itself to itself and shunning even the really valuable advantages offered by the West, as for instance, in the fields of modern sciences and scientific and technological inventions, it has invariably proved to be of no avail. The period of its self-imposed isolation turned out to be nothing more than a brief episode in its history. The currents of Western Civilisation (which go down deep and penetrate into the roots of the society and play havoc with all moral values and standards) have kept on striking against it ceaselessly, disturbing its peace and image of glorious unconcern.

Anyone who is aware of the extensiveness, vitality and all-conquering quality of Western Civilisation and also knows how hollow the Eastern countries have grown, both materially and spiritually, and what a crisis of faith and self-confidence has overtaken them will concede readily that the walled-in attitude of these countries, their exclusiveness and self-isolation, cannot

endure. No nation can aspire to maintain its individuality which lacks faith in itself and is plagued by inferiority complex and suffers from spiritual decay and degeneration. All its efforts to hold its grounc against a mighty civilisation, which has also become the predominant trend of the time, must, ultimately, fail.

The well-known Western scholar, Mohammad Asad, had, in 1932, undertaken an extensive tour of the Arabian Peninsula which had till then been living strictly according to its ancient Arab and Islamic traditions. Western Civilisation had not yet made its debut and even the modern mechanical gadgets and other inventions had not been introduced in it. Seeing the unique atmosphere of peace and contentment that prevailed over the vast Arab kingdom, Mohammad Asad was led to wonder whether it would really be successful in preserving its aloofness and seclusion against the surrounding forces of Western Civilisation. He observed:

> "For how long, I ask myself with almost a physical start, will Zayd, and Zayd's people, be able to keep their souls together in the face of the danger that is so insidiously, so relentessly, closing in on them? We are living in a time in which the East can no longer remain passive in the face of the advancing West. A thousand forces—political, social, and economic—are hammering at the doors of the Muslim World. Will this world succumb to the pressure of the Western twentieth century and in the process lose not only its own traditional forms but its spiritual roots as well?"[1]

The fears expressed by Mohammad Asad were not unfounded. It did not take much time for Western Civilization to break through the fences the Arabs had erected around themselves and force its way triumphantly into the sacred land of Islam. The bazars and homes of Arabia were inundated with latest mechanical contraptions and the so-called luxury goods, the austerity, industriousness, chivalry and large-heartedness and all

1. The Road to Mecca (1954), p. 103.

those other attributes of mind and character which had been the pride of the Arabs from the earliest days were erased out abruptly from their midst.

The new contact between Arabia and the West was established through the routes of culture, civilisation, politics and oil. It was done in a most hurried and haphazard manner. There was no planning behind it, no maturity of outlook had been displayed in its execution with the result that capitulation to the West, of which Mohammad Asad had spoken, became, all of a sudden, an accomplished reality. Beginning with outward forms, customs and usages, even the spiritual moorings of the Arabs have now begun to be threatened by the ever-increasing influence of Western Civilisation.

The Western observers, themselves, are often shocked at the immensity of change that has come over Arabia within these few years. It is not easy for them to understand how the ruggedly simple and down-to-earth sort of life of the Arabs could grow so complex and complicated almost overnight. The profusion of Western goods and gadgets and the phenomenal rise in the standard of living have, literally, knocked the bottom out of the conventional values and ideals of Arab society. Writes Don Peretz:

> "Since World War II many traditional influences have been undermined by oil wealth and accompanying Western influences. The old common cultural heritage, which bridged the gap between the classes, is now disintegrating as the upper sheikhly families, enriched by oil wealth, begin to be influenced by Western products, innovations, customs and tastes. Awareness of the change has created unrest among the lower classes which cannot afford to live in such ostentatious style. Bedouin tribesmen, for example, uprooted from pastoral life, congregate near the towns and become increasingly sympathetic to the restive urban proletariat."[1]

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1. The Middle East Today, (1962), p. 402.

And :

"The zealotry with which the Wahabi tribesmen once defended fundamental Islam, with their emphasis on simplicity, has been entirely dissipated. No longer are there threatening protests against foreign luxuries. Today they are not only accepted, but all levels of society strive to attain them. Tribes that formerly lived as puritanical Wahabis have abandoned the desert for the new oil centres, where they have settled down and become accustomed to the use of Western innovations purchased with their high pay as Aramco employees."[1]

Had a planned and intelligent endeavour been made to attain economic self-sufficiency in Arabia and had its development and reconstruction followed a balanced and carefully thought out course the dependence of the Arabs on the West would, definitely, not have been so complete. In that case, a studied and critical approach would have been made to the opportunities made available by the Western World, the old Islamic maxim of 'take what is good and reject what is evil' would have been acted upon and Western Civilisation would not have been allowed to run over the heart of the Muslim World like a wild elephant. Only the outward aspect of the Western way of life, its top-layer glamour, would not have come in the share of Arabia. But the prudence, foresight, patience and objectivity needed for an undertaking of this kind were, unfortunately, not the strongpoints with the Arab ruling circles. They could function only as thoughtless imitators.

Inadequacy of Customs and Traditions

In an Eastern country, therefore, the negative phase can, at the best, be only temporary. A social structure which is based mainly on national or local customs and traditions and behind which there is not the sustaining force of a powerful creed founded upon wisdom and understanding and which is lacking

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 406-7.

also in the ability to adjust itself to the changing requirements of time, without losing its own social and spiritual identity, and of discriminating between the good and the evil attributes of Western Civilisation cannot be expected to resist its assault for any length of time. A country that loves its ancient cultural heritage but does not have the strength to protect or promote it and is also not endowed with a living, dynamic faith and maturity of mind is destined to go under sooner or later. In the same way, if a community or society begins to accept the advantages presented by the West without adequate planning and preparation, Western Civilisation will eventually swallow it up in spite of what its rulers or spiritual leaders may want: the intelligentsia will pave the way for it and the masses will receive it with open arms without stopping to enquire what in it was really good for them and what was not.

Educational and Cultural Planning

One by one, almost all the Muslim countries have come under the sway of modern Western Civilisation. Their surrender has been brought about without much resistance for the simple reason that the Muslim ruling sections everywhere could not bring forth the mental robustness and perspicacity needed for the task. They could not see the problem in its entirety nor examine it critically. The educational system in the Islamic countries was out-dated and the blue-prints of its reconstruction had not been drawn with an eye on modern experience. Besides, the rejection of the teachings of Islam had created in these lands a state of affairs for which no justification could be found either in reason or in justice and which did not deserve to survive in any age, to speak nothing of the modern fast-changing one.

Afghanistan, for example, was famous all over the world for its puritanism and devotion to traditional forms and ideals. But it could not escape the fate we have indicated above. For some time it stood firm against the Western cultural and intellectual influences and remained unchanged. It held obstinately to its ancient legacy and shut its door tightly even against the

better and truly useful features of Western Civilisation.

As a result of this attitude Afghanistan maintained a total indifference towards its development in spite of the critical nature of its geographical position, with Russia casting its shadow over it from the north and Great Britain from India in the south, and the new economic forces the Industrial Revolution had set into motion all over the world, so much so that at the beginning of the Twentieth Century it was completely innocent of modern knowledge and institutions and other essential forms of progress and advancement. An Indian Muslim, Zafar Hasan Aibak, who had migrated to Afghanistan in 1915 with the object of carrying on from abroad the campaign against the British rule in India and worked there for several years as a trusted follower of Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi and a close associate of General Nadir Khan, has furnished a detailed description of the state of its backwardness in his autobiography entitled *Aap Biti*. He writes:

> "At that time Afghanistan was lagging far behind in education. Hardly one or two per cent of the population could read and write, and it, too, had received education only in the old type of schools. The former rulers were, perhaps, afraid of educating the people lest they became enlightened and rose in revolt against their autocratic ways. During the reign of Amir Habibullah Khan there was only one *Maktab* (i.e., *Maktab-i-Habibiya*), and one Military School, in the whole country. The foundations of modern education and development were laid in Afghanistan by him and had he not succeeded Amir Abdul Rahman Khan to the throne, no one, probably, would have heard of Modern Civilisation and the new system of education in that country."[1]
>
> "Except for Kabul there were no schools on modern lines anywhere. People used to learn to read the Holy Quran in the mosques in the traditional style. The Office-

1. Zafar Hasan Aibak: *Aap Biti* (1964), pp. 54-55.

clerks, who were called the Mirzas, were privately-educated and the range of their information was very limited. The first steps towards modern education were taken only after the Indian tour of Amir Habibullah Khan in 1905."[1]

"In Jalalabad we were told that there was no shop where stationery was sold. Paper could be bought from the butcher but no one sold pen or ink."[2]

About the position of commerce and industry, we learn from Zafar Hasan's illuminating study that "there was only one shoe-factory in Kabul which served the needs mostly of the army. Very few pairs for the civilian population were manufactured in it.

"In the market, generally, shoes from India or Britain were sold. Handloom cloth, both cotton and woollen, was largely in use in the villages. *Pashmina*[3] of good quality was made in Herat from camel-wool. Carpet-making was quite common. The Afghan carpets of the *Feel-Paya* design were exported to foreign countries."

The means of communication were in a miserable state. "There was no railway line in Afghanistan," he says. "Nor is there any even now. The roads in those days were few and, as a rule, unmetalled (kutcha). Metalled roads had been built only in and around the city of Kabul and for connecting it with the other important towns of Jalalabad, Dasa, Lughchan or leading to the electric power-station of Jalal-el-Siraj and the royal winter holiday resort and hunting grounds of Norman. The bridges on these roads were not very strong and got easily damaged during the rainy season. The condition of roads between Kabul and towns like Khandhar, Herat, Mazar Sharif, Gardez and Ghazni was absolutely wretched with no repairs ever being carried out except when the Governor or some important prince

1. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
3. A soft woollen fabric resembling tweed.

happened to pay a visit to the areas covered by them. On such occasions, also, only superficial retouching was done. Horses, mules, ponies and camels were generally used for travel as well as for carrying loads. Carriages were not in vogue. In Kabul, motor-cars were in the service only of Amir Habibullah Khan while the ministers and other feudal-lords and chieftains rode on the horseback.

"The postal system was in the elementary stage. It was used largely by the Government agencies for sending instructions. People travelling from one place to another acted as carriers of letters. The postal service was not taken advantage of generally. Mail from India, including newspapers, was delivered twice,and, sometimes, only once a week, specially in winter. There was also a telephonic line between Kabul and Jalalabad but it functioned efficiently only during the cold weather when the King shifted his headquarters to that town. It was meant solely for official use. The telegraph department did not exist altogether."[1]

The army presented no better picture with its poor organisation and obsolete equipment. To quote, again, from Zafar Hasan :

"Only the divisions stationed at Kabul had the modern type of guns like the German Mausers and the English Martinis. There were a few machine-guns also and two quick-firing mountain howitzers of German make. The rest of the army could boast of nothing more than the out-dated match-locks which had long been discarded everywhere else in the the world. Meals were not provided to the soldiers from the commissariat. They only got the monthly salary which did not suffice for the maintenance of their families. The soldiers themselves bought their provisions and cooked their food. They collected firewood from here and there or by cutting down the nearby trees.

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

> The result was that very little time was left to them for military parades and field exercises. The standard of discipline among them was low and they also did not look very strong and healthy."[1]
>
> "In the whole of the country there was only one civil and one military hospital in Kabul. The head surgeon at the civil hospital was Dr. Munir, a Turk, and the chief physician was Dr. Baig. Indian compounders worked in them."[2]

In the administration even high-ranking officers and departmental heads were not properly educated. In most cases, bare literacy was the highest limit. The chief of the Intelligence service, for instance, did not know the rudiments of Persian grammar.

> "Among the people of Afghanistan, the ruling class was like the one-eyed king among the blind. With illiteracy and backwardness prevailing on all sides, anyone who could read and write a little got a government job. Incompetent men occupied the highest posts in the administration and no questions were asked about their merit or qualifications. Even to-day there are very few graduates or qualified men among the top-level officers in Afghanistan."[3]

Afghanistan's opposition, however,began to soften afterwards and the Western Civilisation, with all its detestable and unhealthy characteristics, set about on its career of conquest within its frontiers. During these thirty-two years such a vast change has come over it that the so-called modern social and cultural practices it had always scornfully looked down upon and rejected without exception, so much so that the attempt to introduce some of them had cost King Amanullah Khan his ancestral throne, are now being adopted by it freely and enthusiastically. The report of the European representative of *Times of India* (Delhi, Bombay), Ritchie Calder, who attended the Afghan Indepen-

1. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
2. Page 63.
3. Page 117.

dence Day celebrations in 1963, is very revealing. It reads :

"Oo-oo-oa's' and 'A-a-ah's' from half a million throats accompanied each burst from one of the most lavish pyrotechnic displays I have ever seen. Afghanistan was celebrating Jeshan, its week-long national festival of Independence.

'You have come at the wrong time', said the Foreign Minister, as we sat in the royal enclosure by the lake where the fireworks were being launched from rafts. 'We are on holiday and we won't be able to discuss the details of our Five Year Plan.'

'On the contrary' I replied, 'Surely the best way to judge the accomplishments of a country is to see its people enjoy themselves. I wanted to see the Afghan women smile.' At that moment a beautiful woman joined us—and smiled.

"That, even more than all the bright lights which hydro-electricity has brought to Kabul, and all the new buildings, all the new industries and all the material achievements, shows what a change has taken place in Afghanistan.

"Three years ago that woman would have been in purdah. If she had been allowed to appear on such an occasion, she would have been condemned to wear the chadari, a shapeless gown covering her from head to toe, with a hood hiding her face and a lace visor, through which to see the world.

"All that has changed. There are plenty of women in the throng at the festival still wearing the hood of segregation. They have not quite got used to the idea that they are now free to uncover their faces. But the vast majority are now unveiled.

"It will be difficult for people outside Afghanistan to realise what a revolution this has meant in the lives of Afghan women. Thirty-two years ago King Amanullah was driven from his throne by the 'Mullas', the priests of

Islam, because he allowed his queen to appear unveiled.

"It would be almost fair to claim that the release of Afghan women from purdah began from mother-and-child health clinics. When Doctor Anna Maria Gade (now at WHO regional headquarters in Delhi) arrived in Afghanistan from Denmark over ten years ago, obstetrics was practically non-existent. There were only 120 doctors in Afghanistan and all of them were men. No male doctor could examine a woman. The local midwives were completely ignorant of modern methods.

"Doctor Gade began to train qualified midwives, including the royal princesses. Mother-and-child health clinics were opened, and the veiled women began to attend them in increasing numbers. It was not just the material benefits they got which changed their attitude: it was meeting women doctors and women nurses and discovering that women could have a career just like men. More important, they found that they themselves, the women patients, were important and not just anonymous, hidden chattels.

"To-day there are five hospitals for those women—with highly competent Afghan women in charge—immaculately clean and hygienic, in the tradition that Doctor Gade established.

"The unveiling of the women of Afghanistan dates from August 1959, when a royal pronouncement allowed, but did not command, the women to discard their shrouds.

"And what did you do?' I asked the vivacious Massuma Kazemi, a medical under-graduate at Kabul University.'

"My sister and I made a bonfire and burnt our chadaris', she said. 'We vowed that never again would we wear the cloak and hood of purdah.'

"Massuma and her sister Feroza, daughters of a banker, will be women doctors in 1965. The first batch of ten women medical students will qualify in 1964, at the end

of a seven years' course.

"To-day there is co-education in the University where girl students used to arrive in their chadaris and had to study separately from the men. All University training is free, the Government providing books, clothes and meals and paying for tuition.

"Many of the girls, however, will become graduate teachers.

"The need for such teachers, men and women, is acute at the University of Kabul which at the moment is heavily dependent on professors from abroad."[1]

Almost the same is going to be the case with Yemen and the other countries of the East which have for a long time managed to remain inflexible in their attitude towards the modern West and have refused to accept anything from it including physical sciences, technological innovations, social and political institutions and military technique.

The picture Yemen presented, at least till 1955, with regard to internal reforms and organisation and contact with the outside world and integration with the spirit of the times can be visualised from the facts gathered by Mamdooh Raza of the influential Egyptian Weekly, *Roz-al-Yusuf*, in an interview with its Deputy Foreign Minister, el-Saiyyid Mohammad Abdullah el-Omari. The report of the interview was published in the journal in its issue of February 7, 1955.

"No Census had yet been held in Yemen," says Mamdooh Raza. "The sources of State revenue comprised wholly of a few taxes and the custom-duty; agriculture was the sole occupation of the people and, apart from the natural rainfall, wells provided the only means of irrigation. The annual budget of the State came to a mere £ 1,50,00,000 and its reserved capital which, in fact, did not extend beyond the personal wealth of the Imam did not exceed £ 8,00,00,000. On the whole, there were

1. Times of India, July 28, 1963.

no roads in Yemen. Only recently a 120 kilometer road had been built to connect the town of Mokha with Ta'iz, but it, too, had not been covered with concrete till 1955.

"There were only 600 *maktabs* in the whole of Yemen, in addition to the primary schools which were found in all the towns. Secondary schools had also been opened in Ta'iz, Mokha and Hudaida. The Armed Forces were divided into three categories. The regular army consisted of only 6 brigades, the militia of 14 brigades, and then there were about 20,000 armed tribesmen who could be pressed into service at the time of an emergency. Animals provided the sole means of transport; only a few private cars were to be seen. The Air Fleet comprised of 11 aeroplanes of which 3 were Dakotas. There was no hotel, restaurant or factory in the entire country. There was also no Police Force. The Government had recently given concessions for the exploitation of coal and oil deposits to European firms."

The general trend of the world and the pressure of development in the neighbouring countries, however, compelled Yemen to introduce some measures of reform, but for that it was necessary to seek both financial and technical assistance from the more advanced countries. Hence, Yemen entered into a number of agreements with Soviet Russia and the Peoples' Republic of China which promised to advance huge development loans and also to undertake the responsibility of executing some of the major projects. By the agreement contracted with China in 1958, for instance, Yemen has received a loan of 70 million (Swiss) Francs to be spent on the construction of a 500 kilometer long road between Hudaida and Sanaa and a textile factory, a sugar mill, a glass factory and a factory for the canning of dried fish.[1]

The obscurantism of Yemen had little to do with deliberation, religious sentiment or national pride. It had stayed back-

1. Amin Saeed: El-Yemen, p. 281.

ward and isolated not because it was conscientiously opposed to borrow anything from an alien civilisation, but because of its ignorance and lethargy. It was, therefore, inevitable for the floodgates it had so tightly barred to give way before the advancing tide of Modern Civilisation, and, once it had happened, there was nothing to prevent Western Civilisation from sweeping over the land and carrying away with it even the good and commendable features of Yemen's heritage. Yemen which, once, was known as 'Yemen, the Auspicious' and whose inhabitants had earned from the holy Prophet the famous compliment that "to you are coming the people of Yemen whose hearts are warm and disposition tender: faith is the strong point of Yemen, religious understanding its property and wisdom its preserve," was soon to find itself immersed in moral, political and intellectual confusion with the shadow of Communism lengthening over it and its new design of life being drawn by the foreigners.

The present writer had an opportunity to discuss the matter with the Deputy Foreign Minister of Yemen, Saiyyid Abdullah el-Omari, the substance of whose talk with an Egyptian journalist we have just reproduced, eleven years before the recent revolution. He had tried to draw the Deputy Minister's attention to the danger that was looming ahead and to impress upon his mind the need to do something about it before it was too late by adopting a balanced programme of reform and reconstruction through which it could be possible for Yemen to preserve its individuality instead of being thrown upside down in a violent upheaval. A page from the writer's travel diary reporting the meeting is being reproduced here for the benefit of the readers :

"February 13, 1951

"We went to meet the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Yemen at the hotel, *Qasar-el-Jazira*. I said to him 'Most of the Arab countries have lost control over their affairs. Their leadership has passed into the hands of the

West. Yemen, of course, can be said to be an exception. It is still in command of its destiny, and I hope, it will not be hasty in gathering up ears of corn from the harvest of the West. It will not fall on it like a starveling. On the contrary, it will accept only such attitudes of Western Civilisation and the Western way of life as are in accord with its genius, religion and mode of life and avoid what is superficial and harmful. Yemen has been leading a life of seclusion for a long time and the realisation is gaining ground here that it has been left far behind by the march of time. I am afraid that in the anxiety to make amends for its indolence it may stumble and fall down or lose its sense of direction and, thereby, do itself an irreparable harm'. I pointed out that the real basis of life in the Islamic countries could only be the correct and active religious consciousness of their people which was to be developed in no other way except through a sustained, popular religious endeavour aimed at making a direct approach to all the sections of the masses for their moral and spiritual reorientation, awakening and instruction. Another thing of fundamental importance was a sound system of education embodying both the authentic knowledge brought in the world by the Prophets, which was the true base and supporting structure of all healthy civilisations and philosophies of life in the annals of mankind, and the modern sciences and other branches of learning in which the West enjoyed ascendency in the contemporary world. I expressed the hope that Yemen will be able to bring the two worlds of knowledge and learning together, and, then, its position among the Arab countries, which could neither be called Islamic nor Western, will really be unique."[1]

Similar sentiments were expressed by Erich Bethmann who had been to Yemen in 1959. Till that time Imam Ahmad had not allowed even the ordinary Western conveniences of life

1. *Muzakkerat-o-Saeh Fil Sharo-il-Arabi* (1954), pp. 70-72.

to make their appearance in his Kingdom. Says he :

> "Not acquainted with modern amenities and not urged by the desire to possess many so-called necessities, the people were relatively happy. The old Imam Yahya and also the present Imam Ahmad, realising that the forces of the new age would cause many changes in Yemen's accustomed way of life and would have serious repercussions, tried to keep the doors shut as tightly as possible. They succeeded quite well, but it is highly doubtful that it will be possible to do so much longer."[1]

After referring to the development plans, institutions and reforms that commanded priority in the national regeneration of Yemen and emphasising the need of foreign experts who could furnish useful and sincere advice for its all-round advancement Bethmann had uttered a warning against neglecting the religious and spiritual aspects of life for the sake of material progress and urged upon Yemen the value of striking a proper balance between the two.

> "While Yemen undoubtedly makes every effort to bring about improvement in the economic sphere," he goes on to say, "it should be mindful also of its valuable religious and spiritual heritage. Material progress alone is neither a complete cure for human ills nor a short-cut to human happiness, as countries in which the greatest human advances have been made are learning to their own sorrow. Only when basic human values are safeguarded and spiritual and religious assets remain a living force in the consciousness of the individuals who form the nation can material progress become a blessing and enrich all aspects of life."
>
> "Yemen by combining wisely its rich spiritual heritage with the kind of modern progress suitable to its needs, can become again an 'Arab Felix', a happy abode for its people. In such a happy combination of wisdom and progress

1. Yemen On The Threshold, p. 71.

Yemen can make a substantial contribution, not only to the Arab and Islamic Worlds but to the world at large."[1]

Basic Cause

A strong and enlightened religious consciousness, which was the logical outcome of Islamic education and training, could serve as an effective instrument of change in the Islamic countries. It could bring about the much-needed reform in the current order of things and provide a guarantee for correct social and economic progress. But, unfortunately, religious consciousness had ceased to guide the thoughts and deeds of men in the World of Islam. It had grown weak and decrepit. On the other side, the materialistic civilisation of the West was raising the slogans of Freedom and Equality with excessive fervour and seemed to be determined upon altering radically the conventional pattern of life in all its forms. The consequence was that unrest and discontent became widespread in the Islamic World and a general feeling of disgust and repugnance against the prevalent values and concepts arose which went on gaining in strength day by day. The uprisings and revolts we witness so frequently in the Muslim countries these days are nothing but the products of this climate of disquiet and frustration.

The Islamic countries, further, seem comparatively more prone to internecine conflicts and insurrections probably because with all their faults and weaknesses, the Muslims still possess some measure of religious sentiment and awareness which impels them every now and then to rise against the injustice of their situation and seek drastic solutions to their difficulties.

Anyhow, so long as general backwardness persists in any

1. Yemen On The Threshold, p. 74.

Note:—With the outbreak of the civil war in Yemen the stage of this decision seems to have passed and the choice before it is no longer between unbridled Westernisation and a happy coordination of its cultural heritage with modern progress. It is now to be seen whether Yemen stays Muslim at all or goes completely Red.

part of the Islamic World, and the distribution of wealth and opportunity continues to be as arbitrary as it is at present, with the bulk of the population living permanently on a semi-starvation level and a small minority lolling in fabulous opulence, and so long as nauseating stories of the fantastic extravagance and debaucheries of the ruling classes keep on setting false standards of power and prestige among the people and the World of Islam, or a sector of it, remains submerged in loathsome ignorance and in other conditions of decay and degradation portrayed so vividly by the well-known Turkish poet, Mohammad Akif, in his poem reproduced below, there will be no end to revolts and uprisings. The poem reads :

> " 'You have wandered a lot through the East, what have you seen?' they ask! 'I have seen, from end to end, ruins, nations with no leaders, broken bridges, closed canals, empty highways, sickly and wrinkled faces, bent backs, brainless heads, indifferent hearts, rusted judgements, slavery, misery, hypocrisy, disgusting vices, diverse diseases, burnt forests, cold chimneys, wild fields, dirty faces, lazy arms; Imams with no following; brother killing brother; days with no precise aims, nights that expect no definite morrow' "[1]

In the same way, as long as the Ulema of the Islamic countries are devoid of the courage to discharge the religious obligation of speaking out the truth fearlessly in front of unjust and irresponsible rulers and allow selfish struggles for power and futile disputations and controversies over subsidiary and unimportant issues to eat up their time and energies and practical instances of religious training, piety, self-reliance and moral and spiritual strength and resoluteness remain almost extinct in their midst, and hostile movements and inimical ideologies are left free to invade the Muslim society, both openly and surreptitiously, and to work themselves out to the full,—as long as this unnatural and woefully un-Islamic state of affairs is permitted to prevail in

1. Halide Edib : Conflict of East and West in Turkey, (1935), p. 170.

the Muslim countries, the World of Islam cannot hope to obtain release from its moral and political chaos and disorder. Revolutions are bound to take place in it, upheavals are sure to rock its foundations at regular intervals so long as the conditions there are so ugly and pathetic. The Muslim countries, today, are virtually sitting on the top of a volcano which is ready to erupt at any moment.

Remedy

Bayonets and machine-guns, tanks and aeroplanes, totalitarianism and regimentation cannot save the Islamic countries from the destiny which is staring them in the face. The State-controlled radio and newspapers, the buying of the hearts and souls of men with money or political patronage, glittering banquets and other celebrations at their diplomatic offices in foreign lands, half-hearted attempts to appease the religious sentiments of the people through holding Muslim Conferences or other similar demonstrations of Islamic feeling cannot remove inner discord and discontent nor pave the way for peace, stability and progress.

The road to their salvation lies only in the appreciation of the hard realities of their situation and in meeting them with courage, foresight and genuine Islamic understanding. The Muslim countries must honestly strive for a radical and all-round reorientation of their socio-political structures as demanded by the true dictates of Islam. All the things that call for the axe should be rooted out without mercy and the necessary changes should be introduced and wholesome reforms and other measures of advancement launched without delay. The principles of equity and justice must be established in Muslim society, as taught by Islam and practised by the Holy Prophet. Steps must be taken immediately for the amelioration of the living conditions of the common man. The basic necessities of life should be assured to everyone. Extravagance and wastefulness which have no place in the Islamic way of life will have to be eschewed out before a solid economic reconstruction of the Muslim World can be taken

in hand. The wealthier sections among Muslims should learn the Islamic lesson of self-denial and austerity and the poorer ones that of dignity, contentment and hard work. The educational system ought to be reorganised soon in the light of a harmonious blending between contemporary knowledge and needs and aspirations,and the basic ideals of Islam. It should be made truly representative of the spirit of the faith as well as of the times so that the rising generations of Muslims may be equipped properly to meet the demands of both, and they can be firm like a rock where spiritual belief, morality, constancy, honour and self-reliance are concerned and, at the same time, lagging behind no one in matters of knowledge, creativeness and intellectual maturity, and are able to respond to the challenge of the West with courage, faith and vision.

For rescuing the Muslim masses from the confusion and unrest they are caught in it will be necessary to work among them for an Islamic re-awakening and to reorientate them morally and spiritually to the absolute values of Islam. They will have to be taken back to the natural springs of their existence as Muslims. The factors lying at the back of the popular discontent will have to be eliminated one by one; the general design of things will have to be basically altered and intellectual and social concepts revised and amended. From the West the Islamic countries will be well-advised to adopt what is good and useful and compatible with their moral and spiritual heritage. Anything which can contribute to their strength and stability or prove helpful in the preaching and propagation of the Word of God must not be rejected by them simply because it is foreign or Western.

For the Muslim East, there can be no other way to peace, progress and self-realisation. Nothing apart from it can hold out to them the assurance of continued adherence and loyalty to the Islamic ideals and programme of life. To sum up in the beautiful words of Mohammad Asad, the Muslim World needs the building up of "an equitable, progressive society in which the Islamic way of life could find its cultural expression."[1]

1. The Road to Mecca, p. 177.

CHAPTER TWO

MOVEMENT FOR MODERNISM AND WESTERNISATION IN THE WORLD OF ISLAM

IN contrast to the attitude of exclusiveness and denial there is the philosophy of defeatism, capitulation and servility. Its advocates are among the most enthusiastic followers and ardent, though immature, disciples of the West. They are of the view that a section of 'enlightened' public opinion in some part of the Muslim World should adopt whole-heartedly the materialistic and technological civilisation of the West, along with all its cultural, social and intellectual implications (which have sprung up in a totally different environment, far away from the lands of Islam), and, then, strive to establish it in its own country, at all costs and whatever the suffering.

The Turkish Experiment

The first experiment of this kind was made in Turkey. The reasons for it were both historical and natural.

Turkey had been defending itself against the steady encroachment by the West, but without adequate preparation. It had not armed itself with the new intellectual and industrial weapons its adversary had forged. It had neglected the duty of learning from the West its useful sciences and new industrial and military techniques and methods of political organisation. It had betrayed a criminal disregard of the need to overhaul itself in the light of the changing circumstances of the world. The

Ulema had fallen a prey to mental petrifaction and sterility They could no longer give to their people the intellectual lead that was expected of them. They could not keep a watchful eye on the ideas and movements which were creeping into the social fabric of Turkey from abroad. Some of these intrusions were, indeed, correct and justified. But the Ulema had lost the capacity to distinguish between the good and the bad. Mentally, they were still living in the 18th Century. To cap it all, the later Sultans of Turkey had exploited Islam and the Caliphate wantonly for their selfish ends. Some of them and their ministers and other dignitaries of the State had gone even to the extent of conspiring with the enemies of the Empire. It is true that instances like these were few and far between, but there they were, and what was worse, everyone knew about them. The younger generations of the Turks were, as such, not to be blamed if they were filled with an overpowering sense of repugnance and hostility against the established order.

Critical Phase

Though the situation that confronted Turkey at the close of the Nineteenth Century was the outcome of natural and historical factors,it was unprecedented in the history of Islam. Till then, the Islamic society had undergone only two kinds of experiences. One was what it had passed through during the first and second centuries of its career. At that time the Muslim society was young, strong and dynamic. Its position was that of a triumphant and dominant power. As against it, there were in the world two other great, ancient civilisations, the Greco-Roman Civilisation of the West and the Iranian Civilisation of the East, both of which had at their command huge resources of art, learning and philosophy and represented the most evolved and enlightened forms of social and cultural existence of their time. The Islamic society, by virtue of freedom from the degrading feeling of inferiority, and the qualities of lofty-mindedness and and self-reliance Providence had blessed it with so lavishly, took advantage of these vast store-houses of knowledge and culture

without betraying a trace of moral or intellectual servitude. Whatever it thought fit it adopted freely in its original form or after first casting it in its own mould and then absorbing it into its life-pattern. Because of its independence and virility and because of the fact that it enjoyed the upper hand these adaptations and acquisitions were not allowed to cast their shadow on the spiritual and ethical framework of the Islamic society.

The second variety of experience the Muslim society had so far countenanced was forced down upon it during the Seventh Century when the Tartars had descended upon the heart of the Islamic World with the savage fury of an uncivilised race and brought the Muslims under their heel. Since these primitive hordes were at the elementary stage of civilisation there was no question of the Muslim society being influenced by them culturally or intellectually. Actually, it was the other way round and the conquerors themselves soon began increasingly to look up to the vanquished for uplift and inspiration. So powerfully were they impressed by the religious belief of Muslims and their customs and usages that they eventually embraced Islam and adopted the Islamic Civilisation with an open heart. They became the enthusiastic defenders of the House of *Ka'aba* and the front-rank champions of Islamic faith in the world.

But the Ottomans were placed in an entirely different set of circumstances. They still were an independent people, commanding a vast and sprawling empire but a great deal of the robust self-confidence which had characterised them in the past had gone out of them. They now possessed neither the keenness nor vitality of faith of the earlier centuries. Arrayed against them, on the other hand, was a youthful and dynamic civilisation which had heralded an intellectual and industrial revolution whose dimensions were growing day by day. To shut their eyes to it was not possible for the Turks, if for no other reason, for the gravity of the position they occupied on the map of Europe. In order to conduct themselves successfully they could neither get any guidance from the past history of Islam since nothing of

the kind had ever occurred to it before nor from the contemporary Muslim World. The Turks were the first among the Muslims to be confronted with a challenge of this nature and the whole of the Islamic World was eager to see if they could offer a lead to the rest of the Muslim countries by the way they acquitted themselves in that hour of trial. The uniqueness of the situation demanded outstanding courage and determination and a deep appreciation of both the oriental and the occidental civilisations. It was a pioneering role Turkey had been called upon to play, willingly or unwillingly, with the entire Islamic society ready to follow its lead. The intellectual and cultural, and, also, to some extent, the political and spiritual future of the Muslim World rested upon the course the Turks were to choose. The hour of decision had arrived; it could not be shelved. The problem could not be evaded nor dealt with in a cursory manner. The Turks had to make up their mind quickly and once for all.

The Conservatives and The Modernists

One could look forward in Turkey to two classes of men to shoulder this responsibility. There were the orthodox Ulema but, unfortunately, they were ignorant of the new developments and of the change the world around them had undergone. They showed little awareness of the intensity and magnitude of the threat the growiog strength of Europe was spelling out for Turkey. The Ulema had opposed even the military and other rudimentary reforms Sultan Salim III (1789-1807) and his successor, Sultan Mahmud (1807-1839), had introduced towards enabling Turkey to stand its ground, politically and militarily, against the emerging European powers.

The other section comprised mainly the young intelligentsia. Educated in France, Germany and Britain or at the few seats of modern learning set up of late in their own country, these young Turks were generally impatient of transcendental truths. They were fired with the unbounded desire of slavish imitation of Western social and cultural ideals and materialistic forms of life. They were wanting in that maturity

of outlook which could promote an objective assessment of the Western philosophy of life. Both mentally and spiritually they were ill-equipped to discover its weaknesses and to determine critically which of its attributes could be useful for Turkey (which was then occupying the position of leadership in the Islamic World) and which of them did not blend properly with its genius and tradition or befit its historical role.

The leadership of this new generation was in the hands of teachers and army officers who, also, were not distinguished for cultural depth or understanding. On the whole, they represented the disgruntled elements of Turkish society who had been driven to an acute intolerance of all that was ancient and traditional due to the intellectual stagnation of the Ulema and the hideous moral and social degeneration of the conservative classes —their slothful indifference, narrow-mindedness and obstinacy— and their shameless hypocrisies and the transparent contradiction between their words and deeds. Added to it was the dismal spectacle of all-round misery and poverty. Provoked by the colossal injustice of their surroundings and the rank incompetence, obduracy and mental rigidity of the privileged classes and religious leaders, the keen and sensitive young Turks had set their hearts on demolishing the existing pattern of things and bringing about a total Westernisation of Turkey as quickly as possible.[1]

1. Commenting on the nature and composition of the Committee of Union and Progress, Halide Edib writes:

"The Union and Progress Young Turks were of petty bourgeoise origin, officers or small officials. In the formative stage one does not come across anyone among them who was a sound intellectual, able to analyse and compare the old and the new world. But they were nearer to the people, entirely home-made. Further, they were mostly Macedonians, possessing a temperament which combines realism and ruthlessness, and will stop at nothing in its endeavour to realise its aims. Therefore, though they also were strong idealists, they would adopt all ways and means to carry out their ideas." —Conflict of East and West in Turkey (1935), p. 73.

Ziya Gokalp

For ideological inspiration Turkey found sociologists and theoreticians like Ziya Gokalp[1] who insisted on the dissociation

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1. Zia Gokalp was born at Diyarbekir in 1875 or 1876. His family had a distinguished record of Government service After leaving the elementary school, Ziya joined the lower secondary military school at Diyarbekir. He was keenly interested in Literature, Mathematics and History. In the secondary school Ziya began to study French and also acquired a good Oriental education with the help of his uncle. He studied the work of the great Islamic philosophers like Ghazali, Ibn-i-Sina, Farabi, and Ibn-i-Rushd. He was particularly impressed by Ghazali's famous autobiography, *Al-Munquiz min Az-Zalal*, perhaps because his own mind too was torn in those days by conflicting ideas. This was the time when the ideas of the French Revolution were influencing the minds of Turkish youth. The headmaster of Ziya's school was a man of liberal and patriotic views. At that time there lived in Diyarbekir a group of intellectuals whom Sultan Abdul Hamid had expelled from Constantinople. Ziya made contact with this circle and began to read the writings of Namik Kemal, Ziya Pasha, Ahmad Midhat Effendi and other leaders of the modernist movement. His connections with the underground movements became closer after the arrival in Diyarbekir of Abdullah Jaudat (Cevdat). This young Kurdish doctor, an avowed atheist and revolutionary, was imbued with the ideals of Haeckel, Buchner, Spencer and Le Bon. In this period of his life Ziya was caught in a bitter conflict between the beliefs in which he had been brought up and the dictates of his reason under the influence of a young Greek teacher. He sought solace in Islamic philosophy and mysticism but in vain. He became an agnostic. In 1896 he went to Constantinople. The only institution which could offer him a scholarship there was the veterinary college He devoted, however, more time to political work than to his academic studies. He was accepted as a member of the secret society, Union and Progress. After some time Ziya was expelled from the veterinary college for his revolutionary activities, and then he was arrested. On leaving prison he was exiled to Diyarbekir and confined to the town. He devoted his time now wholly to studies. Among other subjects he began systematically to study Western and particularly French philosophy, psychology and sociology. But he was not so much immersed in work as to be entirely divorced from practical affairs. He soon became the

[*Continued on next page*

of Turkey with its Islamic past so that it could be left free to reconstruct itself on purely national and materialistic lines. Ziya's argument was that for the Turks, Western Civilisation was not an alien civilisation but a continuation of the ancient

centre of a group of opponents of the established order. In 1906-7 the population of Diyarbekir rose in arms, under Ziya's leadership, against the corrupt and tyrannical provincial administration. After the abdication of Sultan Abdul Hamid in 1907, Ziya and his friends could work freely. He also took part in editing two newspapers, *Paiman* and *Dicle*. Later, he moved from Diyarbekir to Salonika. He was now a national leader. Situated as Salonika was on the Western fringe of the Ottoman Empire, Ziya came freely into contact with liberal Turkish and European circles. He began to believe in the ideal of Turkish nationalism with little emphasis on Islam. The Balkan War broke out in 1912 and as a result of it the Turks lost almost all their European possessions along with the Muslim Provinces of Albania (1912) and Hijaz (1916). The dream of Ottomanism vanished from the political scene and the Turkish intelligentsia became more and more attracted by the nationalist and Pan-Turanian ideals. Ziya's influence on the younger generation was greatly strengthened when in 1915 he was appointed first Professor of Sociology at the University of Constantinople mainly on the strength of his essays. He did not possess the necessary academic qualification. In 1918 he had to leave Constantinople together with the other leading members of Union and Progress. The Military court sentenced him and his friends to be exiled from the country. He was deported to Malta. They were released and allowed to return to Turkey after the victory of Mustafa Kemal over the Greeks in 1921. At the end of 1922 he was appointed Chairman of the official Committee for Writing and Translation. He was a staunch supporter of Mustafa Kemal and worked hard for his party in the elections of 1923 although their relations never became very intimate. In the new Parliament which held its first meeting in August 1923, Ziya represented Diyarbekir. He fell ill in 1924. Mustafa Kemal offered to defray all expenses of his treatment in Europe. In his reply Ziya asked Kemal to take care of his family after his death and to publish his book on Turkish Civilisation. He died on October 25, 1924, at the age of forty-eight or forty-nine, and was buried at the Sultan Mahmud Cemetery in Constantinople (—Adapted from Uriel Heyd's Foundations of Turkish Nationalism, 1950).

Mediterranean Civilisation the earliest founders of which were their own forefathers. In one of his essays he wrote :

> "Western Civilisation is a continuation of ancient Mediterranean Civilisation. The earliest founders of the Mediterranean Civilisation were Turanian peoples, such as, Sumerians, Elamites, Phoenicians, Hittites, Scythians, the Hyksos and the Cumans. There was a Turanian age in history before the ancient age. The early inhabitants of Western Asia were Turks. These ancient Turks, who were attacked by Semites from the south and by Aryans from the north were forced to turn temporarily towards the Far East. But this temporary Eastern affinity does not prove anything against our affinity towards Western Civilisation, the earliest founders of the early Mediterranean Civilisation were our forefathers. Much later, Muslim Arabs, Persian and Turks again improved this civilisation and became the teachers of uncivilised Europeans. By destroying the Western and Eastern Roman Empires they brought about revolutions which twice changed the ages of history in Europe. Even today we have prepared the ground for the opening of a new era in history by causing the fall of the Tsarist regime in Russia. We are connected with Western Civilisation through several contributions, and, thus, have a share in it."[1]

Proceeding to develop his thesis and to show why it was necessary for Turkey to Westernise itself and how would it transform it and breathe a new life into its dying frame Ziya observed :

> "........when a nation advances to higher stages of its evolution, it finds it necessary to change its civilisation too. The Japanese, for example, dropped the civilisation of the Far East and took over Western Civilisation. A striking example in this connection is given by the Turks. The

1. Niyazi Berkis : Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation (1959), p. 267.

Turks have adopted three distinct and dissimilar civilisations during the course of their social evolution. When they were in a stage of ethnic-state organisation, they belonged to the civilisation of the Far East. When they passed to the stage of the Sultanistic State, they entered into the area of Eastern Civilisation. And, today, in their transition to the stage of a National-State, we see the rise among them of a strong movement which is determined to accept Western Civilisation."[1]

Ziya Gokalp sought to establish that adoption by Turkey of Western Civilisation would not mean necessarily the repudiation of Islam. "Societies foreign to each other," he said "from the point of view of culture or of religion may belong to the same civilisation.........Thus, for example, the Jews and the Japanese share the same civilisation with European nations although they differ from them both in culture and religion."[2] Civilisation and religion were two separate things, there being no such thing in the world as an 'Islamic Civilisation' or a 'Christian Civilisation'. He wrote:

"People belonging to different religions may belong to the same civilisation. In other words, civilisation and religion are two different things. Otherwise there could not be any institution common to the groups who belonged to different religions. Since religion consists of sacred institutions, beliefs and rituals, non-sacred institutions, such as, scientific ideas, technological tools, aesthetic standards constitute a separate system outside religion. Positive sciences, such as, mathematics, physics, biology, psychology, sociology, industrial methods, and fine arts are not connected with religions. Thus, no civilisation can even be called after a religion. There is neither a Christian nor an Islamic Civilisation. Just as it is incorrect to call Western Civilisa-

1. Niyazi Berkes: Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation (1959), p. 270.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 269-70.

tion as Christian Civilisation, so it is equally incorrect to call Eastern Civilisation as Islamic Civilisation."[1]

There was the example of Russia which, although it subscribed to the Orthodox Christian Church and belonged to the Eastern Civilisation, had opted for the progressive civilisation of the West and joined the comity of strong and independent Western nations.

> "While Western and Central Europe freed themselves from medieval civilisation, the Christians of the Orthodox Church of the East were still not freed from it. Russians, for example, remained within Eastern Civilisation up to the time of Peter the Great. Peter had many difficulties in his struggle to free the Russians from Eastern Civilisation and to introduce them to Western Civilisation. In order to learn what sort of methods should be followed in transforming a nation from Eastern to Western Civilisation, it suffices to study the history of Peter's reforms. While Russians, until then, were generally believed to be incapable of any progress, they began, after these reforms, to progress very quickly. This historical fact alone is enough to prove that Eastern Civilisation is averse to progress and Western Civilisation is the avenue to advancement."[2]

Ziya Gokalp went on to conclude that for the defence of national freedom and integrity there was no alternative for the Turks than to establish their mastery over the Western Civilisation. He said :

> "We have to accept the civilisation of the West, because, if we do not, we shall be enslaved by the Powers of the West. To master the civilisation of the West or to be mastered by the Powers of the West; between these alternatives we must choose! Today this truth is well-understood : in order to defend our freedom and indepen-

1. Niyazi Berkes : Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation (1959), p. 271.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

dence against Europe, we have to conquer the civilisation of the Europeans."[1]

Ziya Gokalp was one, and, perhaps, the most influential, of the spiritual founders of the Turkish Republic. He laid the theoretical foundations of the modern Turkish State. In his introduction to the selected essays of this noted theoretician, Niyazi Berkes correctly remarks :

"Although he died in the early phase of Ataturk's drastic reforms, one will find in Gokalp's writings the ideas behind the main trends of these reforms. His ideas with regard to the particulars of the Islamic reform suffered most during the ensuing period of drastic secularism. However, I believe that if he had lived longer he would have been able to reconcile himself to the Ataturk's policy because his ideas on the Caliphacy were already at variance with the logical consequences of his Westernist nationalism, being rather fanciful utopias to find a basis of internationality of Turkish nationalism. Furthermore, we know that the constitutional clauses on secularism and the freedom of conscience and thinking were from his pen, as he was a member of the committee which prepared the new constitution in 1924. Probably it would have been more difficult for him to reconcile with the radical purist language-reform policy followed by Ataturk. Nevertheless, he remains as the best intellectual formulator of the main trends of the Turkish Republic : Westernism, democracy, political and economic national independence, and secularism. Although in actual practice there have been deviations from some of his contentions, it is still his style of thinking with regard to the basic issues which has intellectually dominated the modern reforms in Turkey."[2]

1. Niyazi Berkes : Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation (1959), p. 266.
2. *Ibid.*, 13.

And, further :

> "If his own readers on history, folklore, sociology have little value compared to the works of Turkish and foreign scholars of our time, this does not at all minimize his significance as a path-finder and explorer. If some of his ideas are almost forgotten in present-day Turkey, and if some of them, quite new in his time, seem merely commonplace today, it is because they have become facts. All this shows the depth of his influence and the scope of his vision."[1]

Turkey's Imitative Role

The Turkish intellectuals who under the influence of Ziya Gokalp were advocating the conquest of the civilisation of the West were worthy of the greatest respect among the enlightened and progressive sections of the Islamic World, and Turkey would have made a most valuable contribution to the political, social and cultural advancement of mankind if it could have really mastered Western Civilisation and, then, used it for the furtherance of the higher aims and interests of Islam and humanity. It could have fulfilled the role of a model and path-finder for all the Muslim countries that have, today, become the arenas of a bitter conflict between the East and the West and are being required to furnish an answer to the challenge of the modern Western Civilisation, and for which Turkey stands out as the first Muslim country to have countenanced the deadly confrontation between the Eastern and the Western philosophies of life and endured the incessant onslaughts of the modern materialistic modes of thought and living.

Unfortunately, however, these hopes were not to be realised. Turkey began to imitate the West mechanically. It got entangled in the superficial and outward manifestation of Western Civilisation which had no practical bearing on the life and character

1. Niyazi Berkes : Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation (1959), p. 31.

or political greatness of a nation. In consequence, Turkey found itself cut asunder from its immediate past. The glorious cultural and intellectual heritage towards the development of which innumerable generations of Turkish poets, writers and philosophers had given of their best was lost to it. Turkey which till yesterday was the political leader and trustee of the Islamic World became, all of a sudden, a stranger. Internally, a breach was created between its people and the ruling classes. The masses, generally, were still charged with religious sentiment and their attachment to Islam was as strong and genuine as ever. The thoughtless and slavish submission to the mental and cultural attitudes of the West had divested Turkey of its most valuable assets of self-assurance, deep-heartedness and chivalry, and laid it open to confusion, discord and despondency.

The new society was set up , religious feeling and awareness were squeezed out, and the face of Turkey was turned decisively towards the crude materialism and vulgar nationalism of the West. Its intellectual and spiritual horizons were cut down. In the bargain, unmitigated repression was let loose on the people ; there was no mercy shown. The worst of the sufferers, generally, were those who could be of the greatest service to the country and the nation. But the ideological tensions between the ruling classes of Turkey and its masses have not yet ended ; the spark of faith is still alive in the hearts and can flare up again at any moment.

The acceptance of Western Civilisation by Turkey was purely of an imitative nature. It was devoid of all critical appraisement, originality of outlook and highmindedness. No serious attempt was ever made to gain mastery over the civilisation of the West as Ziya Gokalp had urged. On this front, Turkey was utterly routed. Its job has, since then, been to borrow, to import and to imitate. It has remained at the receiving end of the line with the result that during the present phase of its history it has failed to produce a single outstanding personality in any branch of human endeavour. Turkey now is struggling as a third-rate power under the protective umbrella

of the West. Who can say that the Nationalist Revolution has been an adequate compensation for the political importance, international prestige, religious fervour and national self-esteem Turkey had to give up for the sake of it?

Namik Kemal

Before Zia Gokalp, another distinguished Turkish philosopher, Namik Kemal[1] had advocated a more balanced and dis-

1. Namik Kemal was born in Rhodosto, in 1840, to an aristocratic family. He was educated at home and was taught French as well as Persian and Arabic. He entered the civil service at the age of seventeen. He soon came under the influence of the well-known Turkish thinker and nationalist leader Sinasi (1826-1871) and collaborated with him on the Journal. *Tasvir-i-Afkar*, of which he took over the editorship when Sinasi fleo to France in 1865 and became famous as a political essayist and journalist. His essays on Ottoman affairs brought him into trouble with the authorities, and, in 1867, he also fled to Europe. The next three years were spent in London, Paris and Vienna where he studied law and economics. On his return to Turkey in 1871, he resumed his journalistic activities, and, in 1873, produced the patriotic drama, *Vatan*. This aroused such great nationalist enthusiasm in the country that the author was exiled to Cyprus where he remained for over three years. After the deposition of Sultan Abdul Aziz in 1876, he was allowed to return home where he, later, fell foul of Sultan Abdul Hamid and spent most of his remaining years in detention or exile. He died in Chios in 1888.

Of him Bernard Lewis writes: "Despite his fervent patriotism and liberalism, Namik Kemal was a sincere and devoted Muslim, and the fatherland of which he speaks, though he uses a term denoting territory and not community, is Islamic no less than Ottoman. Throughout his life he remained firmly attached to traditional Muslim values and beliefs and was often sharply critical of the men of the Tanzimat for their failure to safeguard and preserve the best of the old Islamic traditions, and to let them inspire and direct the new institutions which had to be imported from Europe. He upheld Islamic values and defended Islamic achievements against European belittlers, and even advanced the idea of a pan-Islamic unity, under Ottoman leadership, to accept, adapt and diffuse Modern Civilisation through Asia and Africa, and thus create an Eastern balance of power to counter that of Europe."—(The Emergence of Modern Turkey, 1961, pp. 138-39).

criminating approach towards the Western ideal. His concept of the nature and scope of future relationship between Turkey and the modern West was more precise and temperate. He wanted his people to accept from the West only such aspects of its civilisation as had taken it forward on the path of progress and political ascendancy.

"The man who diagnosed", observes Niyazi Berkes, "the morbid nature of this (the current) situation and recognised it as a major obstacle to progress towards the establishment of a modern State was Namik Kemal (1840-88). He attempted to show the original, or rather idealised forms of the religious, moral, and legal institutions which were associated with Islam and the original, or idealised forms of the political institutions of the old Ottoman tradition at the time of its prime; and, at the same time, those aspects of the civilisation of the West which had given progress, prosperity, and superiority to the European nations. By his discussion of these three elements, he arrived at the conclusion that there was no basic contradiction among them. Islam, according to him, would provide the moral and legal bases of society, the Ottoman tradition of statecraft, together with its multinational and multireligious cosmopolitan policy of toleration, would be the political framework of the Ottoman (not Turkish) State; and the material and practical methods and techniques would enable this system to survive in the contemporary world of power and economic progress. In this way Namik Kemal distinguished the areas of the three elements in the life of the Nineteenth Century Turks. For him the most important factor in the failure of the Tanzimat was the mental confusion with regard to these three elements. Thus, for example, the *Shariat*, the Islamic law, was dropped in order to take codes from France, while European methods in techniques of education, Government, science, economy and agriculture, were not introduced. By their naive wish to modernise the State, the men of the Tanzimat reforms

unnecessarily undertook the economic and political obligations towards European powers which robbed the Ottoman State of all independence and integrity. They did not apply any of the principles of modern democratic regimes in their administration. But neither the old Ottoman political institutions nor Muslim law were in reality incompatible with democracy and progress or with modern science."[1]

The popularity Namik Kemal enjoyed among his people was unique. He was the most admired of all men in the history of Turkish thought and politics. In our support we have the testimony of Halide Edib who writes, "Namik Kemal, who turned the idea of liberty into a cult, was the man most beloved of all by the Turkish public. There has never been any other figure in the history of Turkish thought and politics who has been and is still as much worshipped by the Turkish public."[2]

But all his prestige could not save Namik Kemal's ideas from being rejected by the actual march of events. The modernisation he had preached had to give way before the burning extremism of Ziya Gokalp when it came to the making of modern Turkey. To put Ziya Gokalp's philosophy into action Turkey found a man of enormous determination and will-power in Kemal Ataturk[3] who by the sheer force of his personality and

1. Niyazi Berkes : Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation, p. 18.

2. Halide Edib : Turkey Faces West, (1930), p. 84.

3. Kemal Ataturk was born at Salonika in 1881. His father's name was Ali Raza Bey. Ataturk's family mainly lived in a small village in Anatolia. He began his education at a modern primary school after which he joined a high school, and then passed the entrance examination to the military cadet school. At the age of sixteen he passed out from the cadet school to the senior military college at Montasir. On passing his final examination he was commissioned as a sub-lieutenant in the army and was specially selected for the staff college at Constantinople. It was the age of Sultan Abdul Hamid. Kemal Ataturk was arrested for taking part in a conspiracy against the Sultan and exiled to Damascus He returned secretly. to

[*Continued on next page*

the ruthlessness of his methods carried the Westernisation of Turkey even ahead of what Ziya had visualised.

Ataturk—A Study

For a proper analysis of the factors which compelled Turkey to renounce its immemorial tradition and take to the path of secular nationalism, exaggerated Westernisation and military dictatorship it would be advisable to enquire briefly into the

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Salonika and joined the Union and Progress Party which facilitated his reappointment in the Army. He was put in charge of the construction of the railway in Macedonia. In 1909 Sultan Abdul Hamid was dethroned. A year later Ataturk was attached to the staff of Ali Raza Pasha on a mission to France. What he saw in Europe made him bitterly dissatisfied with the state of things at home. He was also alarmed by the growing influence of Germany. At that time Turkey was being ruled by four men, Anwar, Javed, Talat and Jamal with whom Mustafa Kemal had very strong differences. He had no interest in their international ambitions or in the expansion of the Ottoman Empire beyond Turkey. He considered this policy to be suicidal. Anwar, on his part, also hated him. In 1912 the Balkan War began and streams of refugees started pouring into Turkey. Their pathetic state made a powerful impression on his mind. Owing to the differences among the Balkan States, the Turks succeeded in retaking Adrianople. Anwar became the Turkish Minister for War. It was the climax of his career. His ambition was to bring the Muslims of the world under the banner of the Caliphate. His act of entrusting the military reorganisation of Turkey to the Germans was strongly resented by Ataturk. When the World War I broke out in 1914 and Turkey joined it on the side of Germany he felt dismayed. He wanted Turkey to remain neutral so that it could be in a position to extract the utmost advantage from the winning side when the war ended. Against his will he had to take part in the war. He fought very gallantly and scored a brilliant victory over the Allies at Gallipoli in 1916. It marked the beginning of his fame. In 1916, he left Constantinople for the Caucasus and a year later, Anwar Pasha appointed him to the command of the Turkish forces in Arabia with the authority of an Army Commander, but before he could take over, the evacuation of Arabia by Turkey had begun. At the beginning of 1917, he was promoted to the rank of a General, and was sent to Diyarbekir as the Acting Commander of the 2nd Army. When the war ended in 1918 in the

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mental and spiritual make-up of the man whom historians unanimously proclaim to be the father of modern Turkey. In all totalitarian regimes the personality of the dictator invariably turns out to be the principal determining factor. His reflection falls on nearly every nook and corner of the society and on almost every sphere of state-activity, and, hence, it becomes essential to look into the inner recesses of his mind and character before one can pass judgment on his role in the reshaping of his country's destiny.

We will confine ourselves here only to the reproduction of a few extracts from his countryman and admirer, Irfan Orga who, in his famous biography of him, written in collaboration with his wife, Margaret, observes:

> "In his college days he read a great deal. He was unsocial and unpopular and had few close friends. He flew easily into a temper. In the classroom he was a model student, self-effacing, eager and intelligent.........Sex drew him like a magnet.
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> "He sought refuge in drink, for he had no God to console him and no belief in an after-life."[1]
>
> "He felt at home with the prostitutes and the homosexuals because they were so much worse off than he. The

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defeat of the Central Powers, Anwar and his colleagues were compelled to go into exile and, thus, the path was left clear for Ataturk. Britain and her Allies occupied Istanbul, there was a revolt in Anatolia and widespread disturbances broke out everywhere. The choice then fell on Kemal Ataturk for the restoration of peace and order. He declared war on the Greeks who had forcibly taken possession of Zamir, and inflicted a crushing defeat on them in 1919. He was now known as the 'Ghazi' throughout the country. Ataturk, then, set up an independent Government at Ankara and proclaiming the liquidation of the Ottoman Empire and the Caliphate, reorganised Turkey as a secular, democratic republican State of which he became the first President in 1924. He died in 1938 while still holding that office.—(Adapted from Orga, Irfan and Margaret: Ataturk, 1962, and Armstrong, H. C: Grey Wolf, 1932).

1. Niyazi Berkes: Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization, p. 251.

underlying sadism of his nature came out. He never credited people with feelings since he had none himself save the fundamental urge to conquer and see others submit to his will. He had to be at the top.

"In Montasir he was introduced to the works of Voltaire and Rousseau and they appealed to Mustafa Kemal and awoke the latent rebel."[1]

"In his youth he had assimilated, along with his revolutionary ideas, the teachings of Ziya Gokalp who had fought for liberalism and freedom of religious thought. Gokalp had been an advocate of Western liberalism and had declared as early as 1900 that the Ottoman empire was destined to crumble due to its slavish adherence to the principles of autocracy. He was fond of saying that 'theocracy' has always been a faithful ally of autocracy. He had preached freedom from religious domination, the curtailment of the power of the Ulema, the various religious brotherhoods and religious schools, of the *softas* (students on fire with holy zeal and dangerous partisans of the Devil in invoking *jihad* or a holy war). He had advocated elimination of the Shariat, the ecclesiastical courts of Kadis—the exponents of the Islamic law—and judged these to be replaceable by civil courts of law."[2]

As regards the attitude of Ataturk towards religion, particularly Islam, the Orgas write:

"He recognised that his real fight was against religion. Since childhood he had no use for God, an abstract name wrapped in mystery and fallacy.[3] He believed only what he could see. Islam had destroyed in the past (he ignored the fact that Islam had been the unifying force which built

1. Niyazi Berkes: Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation, p. 246.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

3. In the same book it is said that Ataturk used often to shake his fist at the heavens during the last phase of his life.

the vast Ottoman Empire), and had sunk the people in a stultified, superstitious morass. He despised the man who spread his hands at misfortune and declared, 'It is the Will of God. It is fate'. He believed that God was non-existent and that man shaped his own fate. 'The power of the mind and the will to succeed overcomes the apathy of God,' he was fond of saying. And : 'The religionists are fond of declaring that the mills of God are exceedingly slow, but all I can say is that He has lived long enough to have heard of electric power.' He was determined to outlaw religion, either by force or guile."[1]

"He had no use for psychological mumbojumbo. Consequently, he had no compunction in denying religion to the nation. Since he gave nothing in its place but the new God, Western Civilisation, it was hardly surprising that the nation fought for its soul. Past history of other civilisations should have taught him that old Gods die hard."[2]

And :

"His hatred of Islam, of orthodoxy was intense. The God he worshipped needed no confining chains, for that God was everywhere, in the trees, the birds he loved to whistle, to the soldiers he illumined with his tenderness. 'We have got to be men from all points of views. We have suffered, and the reason for our suffering was that we did not realise the way the world was going. We are not going to pay any heed to what this one, or that one, says ; we are going to be civilised and to be proud of it. Look at the state of the rest of the Muslims in the world ! What catastrophes and disasters have overtaken them because their minds could not adjust themselves to the sublime dictates of civilisation. That is the reason we too remained backward for so long, and why we plunged finally into the last ditch.

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1. Niyazi Berkes : Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation pp. 237-38.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

If in the last few years we have saved ourselves, it is only because our mentality has changed—but now we can never stop. We have got to go on! And we are going on whatever happens. We have no choice now. The nation must understand that civilisation is a blazing fire that burns and destroys all those who will not pay allegiance to her."[1]

Elaborating, further, on the contempt in which Ataturk held religion and religious men, the Orgas observe:

"It was no secret that Mustafa Kemal was irreligious and this started the rumour that the Caliphate was soon to be abolished. The rumour snowballed when Mustafa Kemal was discovered to have thrown a Koran at the sacred head of Sheikh-ul-Islam, a venerable gentleman and a high priest of Islam. Such heresy should have meant the immediate death of Mustafa Kemal; that it did not, illustrated the changed views of the times."[2]

The unbounded admiration Ataturk had for the Western Civilisation is evident from the lines reproduced below:

"To a large extent", say the Orgas, "Mustafa Kemal practised what he preached. He was the most fervent disciple of the new God, and he spread the word 'Civilisation' far and wide..............When he spoke of Civilisation his eyes lit up and his expression assumed the fervour of the mystic contemplating heaven."[3]

" 'We must dress as a Civilised People', he told them. 'We must show that we are a great nation, and we must not allow the ignorant of the other nations to laugh at our old fashioned dress. We must move with the times.' "[4]

"He had a vision of a reformed, remodelled Turkey, but his human material was sullen and as shapeless as the

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1. Niyazi Berkes: Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation, p. 297.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 239.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 273.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 260.

new recruits during the war. He worked alone then as now—a dynamo of a man who mistrusted everybody's judgment but his own. He had a mania for interfering and superabundance of mental energy."[1]

In his imitative zeal and anxiety to make the Turkish people behave like a modern European nation Ataturk outlawed the fez and every other type of headgear except the hat. The wearing of the hat was made compulsory for the Turks. Ataturk went to such extreme length to enforce the change as if the very existence of Turkey, its national honour and freedom depended on its successful implementation. 'The battle of hats' which took the form of a violent, crusading operation was soaked in blood.

"So serious did the rioting become that a cruiser was ordered to Riza on the Black Sea coast, and elsewhere the independent tribunals went into action. These broke up the rioters, and the hocotar who had inspired the people, were either hanged or forced under-ground. There was no mercy shown. Mustafa Kemal intended to get his own way and he did not care what methods he used. Men were arrested and hanged for making a joke. Both innocent and guilty suffered, and he neither condemned the Tribunals' hasty action nor hesitated in his drive to break the people's will. 'I am Turkey,' he arrogantly said. 'To destroy me is to destroy Turkey.' Such egotistical fanaticism outraged even those who believed in his mission of salvation."

"The battle of hats was won finally by the Tribunals, and the people acknowledged themselves beaten.

"Mustafa Kemal had won, but to prove it to the world he sent Edib Servet, a deputy, to the Islamic Congress in Mecca as his delegate..............Edib Servet was the only one to wear a hat..............He was received by his fellow

1. Niyazi Berkes: Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation, p. 244.

Muslims with reserve."[1]

Winding up their study of the psychology and achievements of Ataturk, the Orgas remark:

"He knew despair in his life and, rarely, happiness. He loved the poor and despised the rich. He was afraid of the intellectuals because their power was potentially greater than his. He loved wine, women and song. He despised those obsequious to him and he often abused them. His strength of purpose, his tenacity, his clarity of vision had led him to the highest places. The man and the century had met and flowed into each other, but he was great because his aims were limited to the creation of a modern State within well-defined borders, and because he had the courage to persist even in the face of disasters."[2]

Revolutionary and Reformer

Another biographer of Ataturk, this time an Englishman, has the following remarks to offer on his mission as a revolutionary leader and a reformer.

"First he set out", he writes, "to finish the destruction he had started. He must cut Turkey away from the corrupting past; he must clear away all the debris. He had already torn up the whole political fabric, changed a monarchy into a Republic, rejected the Sultan, the Caliph, and repudiated all connection with the Ottoman Empire.

"Now he set out to change the whole mentality of the people—their old ideas, their habits, their dress, manners, customs, ways of talking, all the most intimate details of their lives, which linked them with the past and their Oriental upbringing.

"This was far harder than re-building the political structure. As he had said, 'I have conquered the enemy.

1. Niyazi Berkes: Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation, pp. 264-65.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 296-97.

I have conquered the country. Can I conquer the people.' "[1]

The triumph of Kemal Ataturk was complete. Turkey was reorganised as a secular state, politics and religion were separated from each other and Islam was unseated as the state-religion. It was decreed that religion was a private affair, a matter of individual choice, having no right to intrude into the business of the State. The Caliphate was abolished and Islamic law and institutions were done away with. The civil law was borrowed from Switzerland, criminal law from Italy and the law of international trade from Germany. The Muslim personal law was subordinated to and brought into line with the civil law of Europe, religious instruction in public schools was prohibited, the *purdah* system was declared illegal, co-education was introduced, the Arabic alphabet was replaced by the Latin script, the *Azān* could no longer be given in Arabic, the national costume was changed and the wearing of the hat was made compulsory. In fine, Ataturk, in the words of Armstrong, "had destroyed the whole religious basis and outlook of the Turkish State and peoples."[2]

Commenting on the bill introduced by Kemal Ataturk in the National Assemby in 1924 for the abolition of the Caliphate and the secularisation of the new Turkish Republic, the Orgas have said:

> ".................Mustafa Kemal presented a bill to the Assembly on March 3, 1924. This bill secularised the Turkish State and abolished the office of Caliph. Presenting the bill he enlarged on the theme. The Ottoman Empire was built on and existed on the principle of Islam. Islam is Arabic in character and conception. It shapes from birth to death the lives of its adherents: it stifles hope and initiative. The Republic is threatened by the continued existence of Islam in its midst."[3]

1. Armstrong, H. C: Grey Wolf (1932), p, 287.
2. Grey Wolf: p. 290.
3. Ataturk. p. 241.

Of some of the other un-Islamic, or anti-Islamic, measures put into effect by Ataturk and the far-reaching results they were calculated to bear forth the Orgas write:

"What (also) passed by almost unnoticed were the additional death-blows to Islam. The law of unification of instruction heralded far-reaching changes in education and, henceforth, all educational establishments within the boundaries of the Republic were the domain of the new Ministry of Public Instruction. This curtailed the activities of the medressi and the hocalar who taught in them. Next was the creation of a directorate of religious affairs which replaced the traditional ministry of Sheriet and Evkaf. The original purpose of this ministry was to further some religious and charitable cause, such as the upkeep of a mosque or an orphanage, but the system was open to scandalous abuse."[1]

The change of the alphabet alone was enough to bring about a revolution in the life of the Turkish nation by giving birth to a new and rootless generation, ignorant of its own cultural inheritance. The effect of these drastic steps on the culture and civilisation of Turkey has been summed up by Arnold Toynbee in these words:

"According to the legend the contents of a library which had been accumulating for more than nine hundred years were (thereupon) condemned to be consumed as fuel for the heating of the public baths."[2]

"In our own day Hitler has done what he can do by way of book-burning though the advent of printing has made the achievement of 'total' results much more difficult

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1. Ataturk, p. 242.

2. The allusion is to the fictitious story circulated about Caliph Omar that when the city of Alexandria surrendered to the Muslims its reportedly famous library was burnt down under his instructions. Historical research has established the utter baselessness of the report. Allama Shibli has knocked the bottom out of it in his book named *Kutb Khana-e-Iskandaria*.

for tyrants who have to take recourse to this measure in our world. Hitler's contemporary Mustafa Kemal Ataturk hit upon a more subtle device. The Turkish dictator's aim was nothing less than to wrench his fellow-countrymen's minds out of their inherited cultural Iranic setting and to force them into a Western cultural mould, and instead of burning the books he contented himself with changing the alphabet. From 1929 onwards all books and newspapers were to be printed and all legally valid documents composed in the Latin alphabet. The passage and enforcement of this law made it unnecessary for the Turkish Ghazi to imitate the Sinic Emperor or the Arab Caliph. The classics of Persian, Arabic and Turkish literature had now been effectively placed beyond the reach of the rising generation. There was no longer any necessity to burn books when the alphabet that was the key to them had been put out of currency. They could be safely left to rot on their shelves in the confidence that they would never be disturbed except by a negligible handful of antiquarians."[1]

The success achieved by Kemal Ataturk in the expulsion of Arab and Islamic attributes from the Turkish national life was remarkable. Had there been, in the place of the Turks, any other people they would have been lost to Islam for ever and the Muslim World would have experienced another Spain. But the Turkish race, by blood and heredity, is so faithful to Islam, its attachment to the Holy Prophet, to the faith that sprang up from the desertland of Arabia and to its spiritual centre and the Muslim *Millat* is so very genuine, and the foundations of its Muslimisation were laid at such an auspicious hour and by such earnest hands that it still is, on the whole, steadfast in its allegiance to the great religion. A traveller is struck in Turkey by the warmth of feeling, spiritual vitality and overwhelming enthusiasm for Islam which few Muslim communities can boast

1. A Study of History (Abridgement of Vols. I—VI by D.C. Somervell) 1951, pp. 518-19.

of today. Signs of religious resurgence have been asserting themselves steadily since the passing away of Ataturk. The subsequent governments have found themselves compelled to relax many of the religious restrictions imposed during the Kemalist regime and the common people, having demonstrated in unmistakable terms their devotion to Islam, are trying to improve their lot and to give themselves a better environment through a judicious exercise of the right to vote. The indications are that if nothing untoward happens the Turks may still be called upon to play a worthy role in the renaissance of the Islamic faith and civilisation.[1]

Extraordinary Popularity

These were the circumstances in which Turkey became the leader of Modernism and Westernisation in the East. The 'Progressive' sections of the Islamic countries took it up as their model and Kemal Ataturk as a personification of national advancement and freedom. The leaders and statesmen of the newly-independent Muslim countries adopted Ataturk as their hero. No political figure in an Islamic country in the modern times has been able to capture the imagination of the people so completely by dint of his personality and achievement and to arouse such widespread sentiments of respect and adulation as Ataturk did with his limited education and low moral character.

It was due, largely, to his reputation as the saviour of Turkey at a time when it was hovering on the verge of ruin. He had rescued Turkey from the clutches of death, established a strong and independent government and made the Western Powers bow

1. These factors kept on asserting themselves during the regime of Adnan Menderis. In 1961, the Government of the Democratic Party was overthrown by the Army and Adnan Menderis was hanged. But the new atheistic military dictatorship could never find acceptance with the people till in the General Elections of 1968, the Justice Party which stood for the revival of Islamic teachings and practices was again returned to power and it was proved to the world that the Turkish nation was still loyal to Islam.

to his will. It was the time when Muslims all over the East had touched the lowest depth of degradation and in the universal gloom of their powerlessness and disgrace were thirsting for a sign of strength and independence to break in their midst. When, therefore, they saw a man arise among them who could brow-beat the usurpers of the West at their own game and dictate to them his terms,they spontaneously adopted him as their hero and inspirer and began to entertain exaggerated feelings of love and veneration for him.

Moreover, the reforms introduced by Ataturk in Turkey were merely an echo of what had been passing in the minds and hearts of the nationalist leaders of all the Muslim countries. Ataturk had lent a solid expression to their hopes and aspirations and by carrying out the experiment with outstanding success furnished them with a wonderful precedent.

Whatever the reasons, it was beyond dispute that Kemal Ataturk had come to occupy in the Muslim East a position which was without a parallel in recent history. The Turkish Revolution had produced a deep impression universally on Muslims and gone a long way in determining their attitude towards the problem posed by Western Civilisation.

India

The next country to become the scene of cultural confrontation between the East and the West was India. Owing to different cultural and historical reasons the tussle here had developed in such a manner that it could be tackled only in two ways: by opting out unequivocally for the Islamic way of life on grounds of faith and conviction or by choosing, once and for all, the Western way of life on grounds of material progress and prosperity.

The British Government which was the most powerful representative and advocate of Western Civilisation in the East was rooted firmly in India. It had brought with it a whole army of ideas, institutions and techniques. The Indian Muslims, on the other hand, were at that time a beaten lot,

dejected, baffled and humiliated. The failure of the uprising of 1857 had dealt a cruel blow to their morale and prestige, as a result of which a host of new and terrifying problems had cropped up. There was the ignominy of defeat, a complete turning of the tide and the dread of the new masters. Multitudinous charges were being levelled against them ; they were being treated with suspicion and mistrust on all sides. Before them there was a conqueror who was full of energy and self-assurance and a civilisation that was overflowing with youthful vitality and enterprise. The difficulties of the Muslims called for a wise and quick solution.

Religious Leadership and the Ancient Madrassas

At this critical juncture of their history two kinds of leadership emerged among the Muslims of India. One was religious leadership under the guidance of the Ulema and the other was provided by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his West-ward looking friends and associates.

As for the Ulema, they are easily the strongest religious element in the entire Islamic World where Islamic steadfastness and constancy of purpose, piety, righteousness, sincerity and readiness to sacrifice everything in the defence of the honour and prestige of faith are concerned. But in India they were obliged by the peculiar nature of the situation prevailing at that time to assume a defensive role. The barbaric intensity of the vegeance wreaked by the British rulers on Muslims whom they held to be arch-organisers of the Mutiny, the unconcealed official encouragement of the proselytising activities of the Christian missionaries, the rapidly increasing popularity of the Western social and cultural modes and standards and the general moral and social degeneration of their own people did not permit the Ulema to take the initiative in grappling with the new challenges of the times. Instead, they resolved to concentrate on preservation of the remaining manifestations of Islamic consciousness and programme of life. They occupied themselves with building 'fortresses' (Arabic Madrassas) for the safeguarding of Islamic

Civilisation in the hope that from these will issue forth a new army of Muslim preachers and crusaders.

In the vanguard of this great Muslim educational and revivalist endeavour was Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanotwi. Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani in his biography of Maulana Nanotwi has said:

> "After the failure of the upheaval of 1857 his mind was actively engaged in the establishment of new fronts of resistance and struggle. The educational design of the Darul Uloom of Deoband was the most important part of it.
>
> "On their return from the battlefield Shamli[1] the campaigners of Islam did not sit idle. They did not give up thinking even in the face of acute disappointment. On the contrary, they drew up plans for the survival of Islam and the preservation of Islamic theology in India. In their hearts was the eager expectation of Divine help; they were sure that something will happen from above which will open new avenues of hope and fulfilment."[2]

In the same way, Maulana Mahmud Hasan, the most celebrated pupil and successor of Maulana Nanotwi, said:

> "Did the Maulana found the Madrassa (Darul Uloom of Deoband) simply to serve as an educational institution? I was present when its foundations were laid and, as far as I know, its main purpose was to produce men who could avenge the defeat of 1857."[3]

The movement was not without success in reviving the Islamic spirit of Indian Muslims. It engendered in them love of faith, respect for the Shariat, resoluteness and sense of dedication and self-sacrifice the like of which has not been witnessed

1. A flourishing town in the district of Muzaffarnagar where Haji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki and Maulana Nanotwi had fought a pitched battle against the British forces.

2. *Sawanah-i-Qasmi*, Vol. II, pp 223-24.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 226.

in any other Muslim country unfortunate enough to have come under the sway of the West. Deoband became the fore-runner of the new religious trend and the most important seat of traditional Islamic culture and theological learning in India.

But as far as meeting the challenge of the times is concerned, Deoband has failed to make any noteworthy contribution. It has not been able to provide suitable answers to the questions thrown up by the Modern Civilisation. Its graduates have done little to bridge the gulf between the old and the new generations. Much as the Deoband people are advanced in their political views and praiseworthy as their role has been in the fight for freedom, in their educational outlook and in the appreciation of the law of social change they have tended, more or less, to be conservative and tradition-bound. The educational system and the syllabus there was out-dated.

Nadwatul Ulema

The intellectual movement of Nadwatul Ulema, founded in 1893 by Maulana Mohammed Ali Monghyri, and the Islamic theological institution of Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulema, which was established later, were quite capable of serving as a bridge between the old world and the new and of working out a new system of thought that could be representative of the best in both the philosophies of life, Western and Islamic, or, in the words of its pioneers, which could be firm and unbending in the matter of fundamentals and liberal and flexible where details were involved.

According to the originators of Nadwatul Ulema, the curriculum of Islamic theological studies was essentially an evolutionary and progressive programme of instruction which side by side with preserving its spirit and purpose and the fundamental sciences, should also keep steadily changing and developing. It must never get fossilised, but like a living and growing organism should be ready to reform and to adjust itself to the requirements of time. In other words, religion was an absolute, eternal reality which did not stand in need of revision

or re-orientation, but with knowledge it was different. Knowledge was like an ever-green, fruit-bearing tree, the process of whose growth and development was interminable. Islam, with them, was a universal and imperishable religion and a permanent programme of life. Of necessity, it had to cope with the different stages of change and progress in the evolution of mankind. It had to furnish guidance in the midst of varying conditions, ideas and philosophies, and to remove the doubts and misgivings that arose out of them. For this it was essential also for the educational system formulated by Muslim scholars and educationists to be of a dynamic nature. The founders of Nadwatul Ulema gave the call for the revision and expansion of the Islamic educational syllabus. It was an unfamiliar call for India where the old syllabus was still being strictly followed. In the other Islamic countries, too, the reformation of the syllabus had not yet been thought of on such an advanced scale. Even the Azhar had not moved in that direction. The following extracts, one from a speech by Maulana Mohammad Ali Monghyri and other from the writings of Maulana Shibli Naomani, will be helpful in the appreciation of the true significance of this call.

> "The conditions have changed in the modern times," said Maulana Monghyri. "No one now listens to the objections raised in classical philosophy, nor are the sects which expounded them to be found today. It has become quite unnecessary to study their objections or their possible answers. We live in a different world. The critics of Islam have invented new arguments against it based on modern philosophy. Whatever one may say, it is not possible to refute them effectively on the strength of the knowledge of ancient philosophy. The reason is that a satisfactory reply to a critic can be given only when his motives are clearly understood, and the grounds on which he has built up his case are properly appreciated."[1]

And Maulana Shibli Naomani who played a prominent part

1. *Makateeb-i-Mohammadiyah.*

in the development of Nadwatul Ulema and functioned for a long time as its most authoritative spokesman wrote :

> "These Greek sciences are neither our theological sciences nor is the understanding of our religion dependent upon their knowledge. Imam Ghazali had included them in the syllabus of our theological schools so that our Ulema did not remain ignorant of the Greek sources of the philosophical concepts propagated largely by the followers of the *Batini* sect and could provide a fitting answer to the agnosticism of their time. But now these agnostics have disappeared and so have the Greek sciences. The Rationalists have lost faith in the soundness of the issues raised by them. Their influence has waned automatically and they have ceased to be a threat to Islam. In their place, there are new sciences, new problems and new discoveries, and what the Ulema of today need is to master them in order to remove the current difficulties of Islam and to dispel the doubts and misconceptions of the modern age in a scientific manner."[1]

The Nadwa movement was not merely a movement for the revision of the syllabus. It symbolised a permanent school of thought and a new point of view, and, as such, it marked a most praiseworthy step which deserved to be emulated by all the Islamic countries confronted with the tussle between the East and the West. However, mainly on account of the wide gulf which separated the orthodox from the modern sections of Muslim society, it could not receive from either of the two the support it merited. There was a deplorable dearth of leaders and scholars who belonged intellectually and culturally to both of these sections, and having assimilated fully the salient features of the conventional as well as the modern ways of thought and life could combine them into a harmonious whole.

In fine, a large part of the Muslim community remained suspended between the two extremes of blind loyalty to the

1. M. Sulaiman Nadwi : *Hayat-i-Shibli*.

ancient intellectual and educational patterns, the slightest change in which was the equivalent of heresy, and the thoughtless acceptance of everything originating from the West since it was the last word in virtue and wisdom, so much so that even the Western intellectual concepts were to be hailed as embodiments of purity and excellence.

The Nadwa movement, nevertheless, is still quite capable of giving a new lease of life to the structure of Islamic theological instruction, and, thereby, extricating the Indian Muslim *Millet* from the dismal struggle between the traditional and the modern which has been the cause of disruption in so many Islamic countries, and because of which the Muslims everywhere are being won over, more and more, to the concept of secularism.

The leaders of the Nadwa school of thought and the scholars of the Darul Uloom, Nadwatul Ulema, have made an invaluable contribution to the propagation of Islamic culture and civilisation, the compilation of biography of the Holy Prophet and the presentation of the teachings and achievements of Islam in the modern literary style. The writings of Maulana Shibli Naomani, specially his *Sirat-un-Nabi*, *Al-Farooq*, *Al-Ghazali* and *Jalaluddin Rumi*, and his philosophical and historical essays have stirred the rising generations of Muslims and helped to cure them of inferiority-complex in respect of the West. The services of his illustrious pupil and successor, Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, also cannot be ignored. The four big volumes of *Sirat-un-Nabi* by him are a unique treasure-house of knowledge on the life of the sacred Prophet and on scholastic theology. Similarly, his *Khutbat-i-Madras* has been recognised as one of the most valuable works on the life of the Prophet. His literary essays have, further, added to the fund of Islamic learning. The Maulana and his colleagues also took an active part in the literary, educational and even political activities of their day, thus disproving the theory that the Ulema fought shy of the contemporary facts of life and had tittle understanding about what was going on in the world. The Darul Musannifin and its journal, *Ma'arif*, whose Editor Maulana Nadwi had been for a long time, are well-known

throughout the Muslim World.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

The standard-bearer of the other branch of Muslim leadership was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. He stood for the acceptance of Western Civilisation with all its materialistic implications and a total and uncritical adoption of the modern sciences along with all their faults and shortcomings. In his imitative zeal he went to the extent of re-interpreting Islam and the Quran in order to bring them in line with the scientific knowledge and the mental and cultural ideals of the later half of the Nineteenth Century. He had no hesitation in rejecting the transcendental truths and metaphysical concepts which were not subject to the limitations of the material world, and appeared, at first sight, to go against the theories expounded by Western scientists and social philosophers.

Sir Syed had witnessed the last days of the Mughal Empire and the failure of the Revolt of 1857. He had shared the disillusionment of his countrymen, and their mortification at being humbled by a handful of foreigners. He had seen the brutal fury of British vindictiveness that was unleashed against the Muslims for spearheading the insurrection, the utter ruination of what hitherto formed the ruling race of the country, the reduction of the noblest of Muslim families to woeful misery and wretchedness, as well as the splendour of the British rule and the dazzling display of Western Civilisation.

Further, the close contacts Sir Syed had with Englishmen in his career as a civil servant, and in other branches of social activity, had given him a chance of observing their mode of living minutely, and their intellectual qualities and culture, vitality and spirit of enterprise had made a powerful impression on his mind. Possessed of a keen and sensitive nature he was eager to do what he thought fit for his people. His religious education had been of an average standard: his knowledge of the theological sciences, the Quran and the *Sunnah* was neither deep nor wide. He was hasty in judgement, and once

he had made up his mind and arrived at a conclusion he did not hesitate to speak out openly. He was overwhelmed by the British the way the vanquished is overwhelmed by the victor and the weak by the strong. He adopted the European way of life for himself and exhorted others to do the same. He supposed that this kind of integration, the emulation of the social forms of the ruling people, and the cultivation of intimate social relations with them would rid the Muslims of the feeling of inferiority and servitude they had succumbed to. He sincerely thought that they would, thereby, rise in the estimation of the British masters, and begin to live on a footing of equality with them like free, respectable citizens. In his writings one finds innumerable passages advocating this point of view. One of these passages reads: "Muslims in India must be persuaded to adopt Western Civilisation fully so that the civilised nations stop looking down upon them with scorn and they may also be recognised as respectable and civilised in the world."[1]

Sir Syed gave himself no respite. Day in and day out he urged upon Muslims to borrow the Western social practices, including even their habits of food and drink, whole-heartedly. Concluding one of his similar exhortations in Arabic he remarks:

> "Hence, O Muslims! Act on it not in the spirit of vanity, but so that you may gain in stature and become great, and no one may treat you with contempt because of the degradation and misfortune you have got accustomed to. God knows everything about our motives and judges us in respect of our hearts justly."[2]

In April 1862, Sir Syed went to England. He was the first Indian Muslim of note to undertake the voyage. The Suez Canal was then under construction and Sir Syed had the opportunity of meeting its builder, Ferdinand de Lesseps, who was travelling by the same boat.[3] In London he was received with

1. *Tahzib-ul-Ikhlaq*. Vol. II, p. 1.
2. *Ahkam-Ta' am-Ahl-e-Kitab*, p. 50.
3. The Suez was opened for navigation with great pomp and ceremony on November 17, 1869. At that time Sir Syed Ahmed was in England.

singular warmth and ceremony. He was treated as a distinguished guest and a worthy friend. The most exclusive circles of English society opened their doors to him. He was invited to regal parties and lavish receptions were held in his honour where he was able to acquire a first-hand experience of the character and the design of living, in all its glamour, of the elite by the British nation. The title of C.S.I was conferred upon him, he was received by the Queen, the Prince of Wales and high-ranking Ministers and made an honorary member of clubs and academical societies famous for their exclusiveness. He attended the annual dinner of the society of Civil Engineers at which he heard of the progress made in technology during the preceding year and saw for himself the development projects which had been completed or were nearing completion—projects which had brought about a marvellous transformation in the political and economic structure of Britain and paved the way for its ascendancy in the world.

Sir Syed had visited Britain and France at a time when these countries were at the zenith of their power, and the modern sciences and technology were in command of unchallenged supremacy. Symptoms of rot and degeneration which became manifest after World War I had not yet been noticed in the Western society. The Western Civilisation was pulsating with life. It was ready to conquer the world. Sir Syed was, literally, bewitched by what he saw, and in his enthusiasm he failed to take note of the patent failings and weaknesses of the Western order of things, such as, the utter disregard of the higher moral and spiritual values, the insatiable lust for political aggrandisement and the unbounded self-conceit which had turned the Britishers into a race of international gangsters and whose consequences India herself was enduring in no uncertain manner.

The Western norms of life and cultural concepts made a terrific impact on Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's mind and he returned home, in October 1870, an ardent admirer of the civilisation of the West and determined to reconstruct the Muslim society

on its lines. In India he launched his movement with indubitable earnestness and zeal and pressed every ounce of his massive energy to the task which was now the reigning passion of his life. His outlook became entirely materialistic and the surrender he made to the visible phenomenon was so complete that he proceeded to interpret the Islamic faith and the Holy Quran also in the light of materialistic thought, so much so that he made a mockery of the basic principles of Arabic grammar and played foul with the Arabic lexicon by giving strange meanings to words and turning and twisting the idioms to suit his purpose. His commentary of the Quran provoked the bitter hostility of Muslim religious and literary circles. It has been correctly remarked by the noted Egyptian scholar, Mohammad-el-Bahi, that:

> "Sir Syed's movement was based upon his excessive adoration of the physical sciences and the materialistic civilisation of the West in the same way as some of the present-day thinkers seem to be unduly impressed by scientific progress and inventions upon which the Western Civilisation is founded. Exaggerated adulation of the physical sciences cuts across the spiritual and idealistic values of life. It weakens them and detracts from their importance although these very values form the base of all divine religions and have found their fullest expression in Islam. The immoderate veneration of material sciences sometimes leads one to the repudiation of transcendental truths. This, precisely, is what Jamaluddin Afghani has attributed to the materialistic rationalism of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, and in spite of Sir Syed's protestations that he was fighting in the defence of Islam, has prompted him to lay the charge of atheism at his door.[1] Sir Syed asserted that

1. The article of *El-Urwatul Wuthqa* (brought out under the patronage of Jamaluddin Afghani) in criticism of Sir Syed's standpoint reveals a certain amount of exaggeration and misunderstanding which however was probably due to Syed Jamaluddin's ignorance of the Urdu language and Sir Syed's general reputation.

his aim was to evolve for Muslims a way of life which could make it possible for them to adopt modern culture and knowledge while still remaining true to their faith."[1]

The excessive materialistic inclination, the overglorification of human reason and intellect, the tendency to regard the Will of God as subordinate to the ordinary operation of the law of cause and effect, and the impudent misinterpretation of the teachings of the Quran proved to be the fore-runners of a new intellectual confusion and waywardness and encouraged people to bring down the elucidation of the faith and the interpretation of the Holy Quran to the level of a child's play.[2]

Two Major Drawbacks

Two major drawbacks prevented the reform movement of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan from exercising a positive and rejuvenating influence on the Islamic World and from developing into a constructive endeavour, consistent with the needs and circumstances of a society established fundamentally on spiritual belief and on the Apostleship of Prophet Mohammad, which could fill the huge intellectual vacuum created by the onward rush of Western Civilisation and the material sciences. One was that Sir Syed's educational design was not conceived with an eye on the natural temperament and environment of the Indian Muslims among whom it was to be introduced. Sir Syed had not taken care to give it a definite Islamic orientation and to keep it immune from the grossly materialistic impulses released by the modern Western Civilisation which are totally discordant with the spirit of an Eastern-Islamic society. The entire structure had been imported by him straightaway from the West with all the characteristic forms and traditions associated with its people and civilisation. Sir Syed had insisted not only on the acceptance of the Western educational system but of Western culture

1. *El-Fikr-el-Islami-el-Hadees*, pp. 15-16.

2. A classical instance is provided by the commentary of the Quran by Mohammad Ali Lahori.

as well. It was, for instance, implicitly laid down in the constitution of the college he founded that the principal and, at least, two of its teachers, and the headmaster of the high school affiliated with it must always be Europeans, and, the finances of the institution permitting, the number of Europeans on the staff should be increased even more.[1]

Among the senior members of the staff of the MAO College four or five always used to be Englishmen who, automatically, wielded an extraordinary influence on the affairs of the college and on the character of its students. They also took advantage of their position to play a vital role in the politics of the country. Mr. Beck, the then principal of the MAO college, for example, rose to be the first Englishman to function as the guide and helmsman of Muslim politics in India with consequences most lamentable not only for the political evolution of the country as a whole but also in respect of the crystallisation of the political attitude of Muslims.[2]

The educational philosophy and endeavour of Sir Syed and his call for the emulation of the Western manner of living became, so to speak, complementary with each-other with the result that a great deal of doubts and suspicions were aroused in the minds of the people about his educational movement. In Muslim religious circles the reaction was particularly vehement and a counter movement was launched by them to boycott the new educational system. A host of unnecessary difficulties, thus, came to be created in its way. Even the Ulema who, in the beginning, were not opposed to the study of the English language and the useful modern sciences became its hardest critics when they saw that the movement had fallen in the wrong direction and a number of undesirable elements had become associated with it and when the unconcealed subservience to the Western philosophy of life was brought home to them and they experienced the unwholesome influence it was exercising on Islamic

1. *Hayat-i-Jawed*, Vol. II, p. 83.
2. Abdul Hasan Ali Nadwi: *Muslims in India* (1954)

spiritual convictions and morality, and the way the students of the MAO College were getting swayed by the Western patterns of life and the political machinations of the British rulers, thanks to the extraordinary power wielded by its English Principal and other European members of the staff. A new generation had been thrown up among Muslims as a product of Sir Syed' movement, which was pronouncedly Western in its outlook, but, on the whole, weak and shaky spiritually.

The other drawback was the rigid insistence of Sir Syed on the Western liberal education, to the exclusion of the practical sciences which, in fact, held the key to the phenomenal rise of the Western Powers in the world and the stupendous advantages accruing from the pursuit of which he had himself observed with open-eyed wonder during his stay in Britain. If there was anything to be learnt from the West it were the physical sciences. But Sir Syed was so emphatically opposed to the incorporation of scientific and technical education that he wrote bitter articles against it whenever a suggestion was made. In one of such articles appearing in the *Aligarh Gazette* of February 19, 1898 Sir Syed declared (in the words of Maulana Hali) that, "there was not much need for technological education in the existing conditions of India. What was needed primarily was a first-class liberal education, which it had not yet been possible to acquire fully.[1]

Commenting on Sir Syed's attitude towards technical education, Maulana Hali writes:

> "For some years high Government officers had been stressing the importance of technical education in their speeches. Because of it Sir Syed began to fear that the British government was proposing to put an end to advanced liberal education in India, and, whenever, he heard of such a speech he wrote something in its criticism. It was for this very reason that he moved a resolution against technical

1. *Hayat-i-Jawed*, Vol. II, p. 106.

education at the Conference[1] and delivered a powerful speech which can be seen in the report of its proceedings."[2]

Consequently, the Muslim College of Aligarh grew up with a purely intellectual and literary bias, and the desire to acquire Western habits and customs and to excel in the knowledge of English language and literature became the predominant urge with its better gifted and more ambitious scholars. It did produce some fine writers and debaters in English and a number of excellent administrators but no outstanding men in physics, chemistry, mathematics or technology, and the goal before its alumni largely remained the public services and a few other professions like law.

Fruits

All this notwithstanding, Sir Syed was unique in many respects among all the Muslim leaders of his time. He had a most powerful personality and waged his struggle on a very wide front. The success his movement achieved and the amount of influence it exercised on the rising generations of Muslims were unparalleled in the social and educational history of Muslim India. Sir Syed left his mark on language and literature, too, and laid the foundation of a new intellectual and literary school which proved very fertile and originative.

The great Aligarh movement, whose destinies Sir Syed guided with conspicuous sincerity and ability for about half a century, was successful in a considerable way in filling the educational and economic void created in the Indian Muslim society with the collapse of the Mughal Empire and the establishment of the British rule. Muslims were relieved, to some extent, of their despondency and frustration. The movement gave to the community a fair number of highly accomplished young men, writers, thinkers, journalists and politicians, who spearheaded the Khilafat movement and played a role worthy of their glorious past in the national struggle for independence. Later, when

1. Meating Mohammaden Education Conference.
2. *Hayat-i-Jawed*, Vol. II, p. 106.

the demand for a separate Muslim homeland was raised and the Muslim State of Pakistan came into being, the inspiration and guidance for it was provided mainly by the Muslim University of Aligarh. But, on the whole the Aligarh movement fell much short of expectations in providing a suitable answer to the cultural and intellectual needs of Muslims at that fateful juncture of their history. The task that lay before it was the harnessing of the mental and material experiences of the West to the requirements of Muslim society and the production of a new Islamic generation, firm of faith and strong of conviction and alive to the role it had to play in the cultural leadership of the world ; which could take from the Western Civilisation what was good and useful in it and reject what was false and injurious and whose conclusions and researches had their origins in its own genius and were truly representative of Islamic insight and self-reliance—a generation in whose thought and action the 'joy of character' was inter-mixed with the love of adventure and the courage to take risks. The Islamic World had been waiting eagerly for such a generation to come up and pull it out of the confusion and bewilderment it had got caught in for it alone could give back to Islam the central place in the leadership of the contemporary world and civilisation.

Akbar Allahabadi

It was left to Akbar Allahabadi to raise his voice against the humiliating intellectual and cultural servility to the West. In spite of his conservative background Akbar was intimately acquainted with the social, moral and intellectual attitudes of the modern Western Civilisation and employed his wit to devastating purpose in exposing its fallacies. He discharged the painful duty of upbraiding modern educated young men and women, who were a part of his own flesh, through the powerful medium of his satirical poetry which he carried on till the end of his days. He had full faith in the sincerity of Sir Syed but there was no reason for him to accept blindly his educational policy as well and the call for the

uncritical adoption of the Western way of life that went with it. His criticism of the excessive Westernisation of the MAO College and the ideological waywardness, indolence and religious apathy and the artificially inflated standard of living, the slavish imitation of the fashion of the day, the general prejudice against men of religion, the immoderate partiality for Government jobs, the intolerance of the conventional values of Oriental civilisation, and the downright materialistic mode of thinking of the up and coming generation was both bold and subtle. Through the magic of his verses he drew a vivid picture of the Western educated classes in which all the contours and lineaments of their newly acquired personality could be clearly seen. His poems gained an unprecedented popularity in the country and were read with enthusiasm by the old and the young alike.

But with all his popularity Akbar could not stem the tide of Westernisation. He could not offer an alternative programme, a new and positive direction to the emerging society. The weakness lay in the medium he had chosen for the propagation of his views. Biting wit and pungent satire in literature possess, of course, the spontaneity of appeal but their effectiveness is, generally,limited and transitory. Such a form of poetry does not go deep down into the soul to work up a radical change. Nevertheless, Akbar's endeavour did not go entirely in vain. His contribution to the evolution of modern social and literary forms in India also cannot be denied.

National Awakening and the Boycott of Foreign Goods

The West-oriented movement continued to gain in strength among the educated classes. Nothing could arrest its advance. At the same time, the inherent reserve and restraint of Indian character, its habitual conventionalism and the dislike of everything outrageously new and its essential fondness for simplicity in life did not allow the process of Westernisation to assume the sweeping proportions it had done in the countries of the Middle East. Then there also occurred a turn of events which proved to be a major obstacle in its progress. This new development dealt

a severe blow to the prestige of the British rule under whose protective wings the modernist movement had been growing in India. It also gave rise to serious misgivings about the worth, merit and fairness of the Western Civilisation and its eligibility for world-leadership. Suddenly, a strong feeling of repugnance and revolt swelled up in the country against the standard-bearers of modern civilisation and there was a widespread urge to boycott everything associated with Britain, cultural norms, social concepts and merchandise.

The development was the full-scale confrontation between the Western Allies and the Ottoman Empire during World War I. The Muslims were moved to their depths for they had come to look upon the Ottoman Empire as the sole surviving symbol of Muslim glory, the custodian of the Caliphate and the defender of Islam in the world. When Turkey was defeated in 1918 and the British occupied Constantinople and proceeded to divide the Ottoman Empire among the Allies, feelings ran so high in India that both Hindus and Muslims joined hands to launch the historic Khilafat Movement against the British Government. In those wonderful days Gandhiji was seen in the close company of Maulanas Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Abul Kalam Azad. In 1920, the call of civil non-cooperation and the boycott of foreign goods was given and, instantaneously, it became the most effective weapon in the fight against British Imperialism. The Indian nation rose like one man against the injustice of foreign exploitation. One of the principal items in the campaign of non-cooperation was that all goods imported from abroad should be shunned and the national cultural heritage be revived and re-asserted particularly in matters of dress and general social behaviour. The main emphasis was to be on simplicity and economy. Thanks to the extraordinary awakening produced by the movement, the spell of the West was broken in many an Indian heart. People made bonfires of their European clothes and even the rich and so-called advanced classes discarded the wasteful Western habits and customs and took to the practice of austerity in daily life. In the lives of

hundreds and thousands of men including prosperous lawyers and wealthy businessmen there came a big change. They courted arrest and voluntarily endured all kinds of hardships and gave a glowing and unprecedented evidence of patriotic feeling, ascetism and self-abnegation.

The religio-political Khilafat movement signified the beginning of India's struggle for emancipation which, unlike the other freedom-movements of the East, was half political and half social. It was based on a distinct ideology and an economic philosophy all its own, and, as such, went a long way to counteract the growing influence of Western Civilisation by promoting political and religious consciousness on a popular scale. It was largely instrumental in giving back to the people their sense of national dignity and self-respect.

Iqbal's Challenge

By the beginning of the 20th Century, Muslim young men had started to take up seriously the study of the West along with its cultural and intellectual impulsions. The establishment of the modern universities had enabled them to undertake a critical examination of the Western aims and ideals. The awe-inspiring hold of Western Civilisation and of its torch-bearers had begun to weaken. Indian Muslims were now going in an increasing number to Europe for higher education and staying at its famous centres of learning for long periods of time. Their introduction to modern civilisation was not merely bookish. They had the opportunity of observing it from within and learning about it directly from its chosen representatives. They would study the different Western philosophies and seek to unfathom their origins and sources of inspiration. They had a first-hand experience of the Western mind and the colossal national self-conceit it bred. From the closest range they saw the arrogance of the Western people and the holier-than-thou attitude they adopted towards the other races of the world. The first signs of the mental poverty of the West, the first warnings of decay and degeneration in the Western society,

became apparent to them. They saw the essential soullessness of Western Civilisation and its unhealthy and ruinous attributes side by side with what in it was really useful and constructive. All these things made a deep impression on their minds and aroused sentiments about the Western way of life that could not be possible without living in the West for a considerable length of time and making a comparative study of its ideals and institutions and, also, without that spark of faith which was still alive in their breasts even though it had got submerged under a heap of ashes. In these circumstances, it was natural for some of the more intelligent and sensitive among them to return home shaken and disillusioned in their fondest dreams and determined to raise the banner of revolt against the civilisation of the West with all their strength. Their criticism of the West was courageous, but also fair, logical and objective. It was free from prejudice.

Among the intellectual critics of the West the foremost was Sir Mohammad Iqbal, of whom it can be said that modern education has produced no better specimen in India during the current century. We can legitimately describe him as the most accomplished thinker of the modern East. No Oriental scholar had made a deeper and more penetrating study of Western thought and civilisation. He had examined the fundamental attributes of the West minutely and tried to unearth the sources of the poison that had infiltrated into its soul and become an inseparable part of its disposition, thanks to the overpowering materialistic inclination of the Western people and their persistent disregard of transcendental truths. He says:

> Civilisation of the West is perversion of heart and mind,
> Since its soul could not remain unpolluted;
> When the soul loses its purity everything goes,
> Cleanliness of conscience, loftiness of mind, refinement of taste.[1]

1. *Zarb-i-Kaleem*, p. 69

In the outcome there was the gnawing sensation of inner emptiness, boredom and frustration which plagued the life of the average Westerner. By giving its civilisation a manifestly artificial and mechanical character the West had destroyed its subliminal content and rendered it unworthy of Divine grace and benevolence.

This unbounded luxury, this government, this trade,
The heart in the unillumined breast unblest with peace;
Dark is the Frankish country with the grime of its machines,
This 'Valley of Blessedness and Hope' is not worthy of Divine Splendour.[1]

Iqbal returns again and again to the godless character of the Western design of life which urged by its intolerance of religion and morality had taken to the worship of the false deities of materialism and erected a new temple for itself.

Of this civilisation of ungodliness beware!
At war which is with men of Truth;
This mischief-monger nothing but mischief breeds,
In the Harem[2] it re-instals the idols of *Lat*[3] and *Uzza*;[4]
By its sorcery, the eye of the heart is sightless,
The soul thirsty with its barrenness;
The joy of eagerness it kills in the heart,
Nay, the heart itself it destroys;
The depredations of the old thief are for all to see,
Even the tulip cries, "What have they done to my scar?"[5]

Annihilation of man was the profession of this civilisation, and commerce and industry its sole aim and occupation. As long as it was predominant in the world, there could be no peace among men, no selfless love, no sincerity.

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1. *Zarb-i-Kaleem*, p. 141
2. The sacred enclosure of the House of Ka'aba at Mecca. —Translator
3. & 4. Names of Idols worshipped by Pagan Arabs. —Translator
5. *Zarb-i-Kaleem*, p. 41

Annihilation of man is the business of modern civilisation,
And the cloak it uses is trade;
Thanks to these banks, the products of Jewish ingenuity,
The light of Truth from man has departed;
Till this system from the world is uprooted,
Religion, wisdom and culture must remain a dream.[1]

The Western Civilisation, though young in years, was already caught in the clutches of death and ready to disintegrate. It was quite likely that the Jews themselves, who had established mastery over it, would be the inheritors of its 'sacred legacy'.

Nevertheless, it would not die a natural death. The indications were that it would commit suicide by cutting its throat with the dagger it had forged with its own hands.

Thine civilisation will kill itself with its own dagger,
A nest built on a tender bough must be fragile.

The very progress Western Civilisation had made in its journey towards the conquest of the world without the controlling hand of religion and morality and without the fear of God had begun to spell its doom and it was now being feared that it would ultimately be consumed by its own fire.

The arrogant intellect that has laid bare the treasures of nature,
In its own nest is threatened by the lightning it released[2].

"The world of profit, trade, deceit and turpitude' built up by the West was crumbling fast and a new world was rising in its place.

But a new world is being born—the old one is dying,
Which the dice-throwers of Europe have made a gambling-den.[3]

1. *Zarb-i-Kaleem*, p. 37-38
2. *Baal-i-Jibreel*, p. 176
3. *Ibid.*, p. 176

The civilisation of the West, indeed, was not without the lustre of knowledge. It was endowed with abundant vitality and warmth of life and never got tired of demonstrating its proficiency in industry, science and technology. But the spirit of creativeness and originality had departed from it. In Western Civilisation there was the gain of the 'mind' but the loss of the 'heart'. Its leadership had become dogmatic, tradition-bound and static. Its major centres of activity had grown bankrupt from within and insensitive to the things of the heart.

> Remember the days I was in the tavern of the West,
> The cups of which glittered even more than the mirror of Alexander;[1]
> To wine the intoxicated eyes of bartender, the Creator,
> The glance of the cup-bearer, to wine-drinkers the Prophet;
> Without a Kaleem whose splendour is, without a Khaleel[2] whose fire,
> Reckless intellect the enemy of love's fortune;
> Its atmosphere is devoid of the heat of impatient sigh,
> And patrons without the stumble of an intoxicated soul.[3]

At another place Iqbal describes how the heart of the West is dark, although its face is bright.

> Though Europe is radiant with the light of knowledge,
> The 'Ocean of Darkness' is barren of the 'Fount of Life',
> In splendour, in seduction, and in grace,
> The buildings of banks outsoar the Houses of God;
> In appearance it is trade, in reality gambling,

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1. A celebrated mirror said to have been made by Aristotle and placed on the summit of a tower built by Alexander the Great at his newly built city of Alexandria. —Translator

2. Title of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) who was cast into the fire by Namrud but remained unscathed by the grace of the Lord. —Translator

3. *Payam-i-Mashriq* p. 248

The gain of one is sudden death to millions;
Science, Philosophy, College, Constitution,
Preach man's equality, and suck man's blood,
Want and unemployment, lewdness and intoxication,
Who says the gifts of the Occident are few?
A nation unblessed by Divine Light,
Steam and electricity bound its works.

A deeper and more substantial study of Western Civilisation, its fundamental concepts and ideals, is found in Iqbal's *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.* The language of philosophy, ostensibly, is better suited than the language of poetry for critical expression. While shedding light on the out and out materialistic foundations of the Western cultural and intellectual structure and on the numerous difficulties and problems it had succeeded in setting up for man on all sides, Iqbal, in one of his lectures, observes:

"..... ....Wholly shadowed by the results of his intellectuall activity, the modern man has ceased to live soulfully, i.e., from within. In the domain of thought he is living in open conflict with himself: and in the domain of political life he is living in open conflict with others. He finds himself unable to control his ruthless egoism and his infinite gold-hunger which is gradually killing all higher striving and bringing him nothing but life-weariness. Absorbed in the 'fact', that is to say, the optically present source of sensation, he is entirely cut off from the unplumbed depths of his own being. In the wake of his systematic materialism has at last come that paralysis of energy which Huxley apprehended and deplored."[1]

"Modern atheistic socialism, which possesses all the fervour of a new religion, has a broader outlook; but having received its philosophical basis from the Hegelians of the left wing, it rises in revolt against the very source which could have given it strength and purpose."[2]

1. The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam (1944), pp. 186-87.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 187

Iqbal denounces Western society as a society behind which a bitter, cold-blooded battle is perpetually being fought and Western Civilisation as a civil·sation which has lost its spiritual integrity on account of the clash between the religious and political values.

With devastating candour Iqbal indicts both Capitalism and Communism as the two branches of the same tree, one of which is inclined towards the West and the other towards the East. Where the intrinsically materialistic origins of thought and the narrowness of the concepts of man and life were involved there was not much to choose between the two. Depicting, in one of his poems, an imaginery meeting with Jamaluddin Afghani in the course of an imaginary journey, Iqbal offers the following comments on his behalf on the two ruling ideologies of the present era:

The soul of both of them is impatient, restless,
Both of them deny God and deceive mankind;
One lives by production, the other by taxation,
And man is caught between the two stones like a glass;
The one puts to rout science, religion, art,
The other robs the body of soul, the hand of bread;
I have perceived both drowned in water and clay,
Both bodily burnished, both utterly dark of heart;
Life is passionate burning, an urge to make,
To cast in the dead clay the seed of the heart.

II

The Westerners have lost the vision of heaven,
The pure spirit they seek in the body;
The pure soul takes not colour and scent from the body,
And Communism has nothing to do save with the body;
The religion of that Apostle who knew not Truth,
Is founded upon equality of the belly;

The abode of fraternity being in the heart,
Its roots are in the heart, not in water and clay.

Islamic Countries

Iqbal held that Western Civilisation which itself was groaning on the death-bed could do no good to the Islamic World and it would be patently absurd for Muslims to look upon it as a saviour.

Even the naked truth they cannot see,
Whose vision servility has blurred;
How can Iran, Arabia suck new life,
From the West, which itself is at grave's edge?

The way the West had paid back the debt of gratitude it owed to the East has been commented upon by Iqbal in these verses:

To the Franks thé dust of Syria gave,
The Apostle af chastity, compassion, love;
The Franks to Syria, in return, have sent,
Wine, gambling and prostitution.

Modernists of the East

Iqbal was intensely mistrustful of the activities of the champions of Modernism—or, rather, of Westernisation in the East. He thought their progressivism was only a prelude to and a cloak for the wholesale surrender to the Western philosophy of life.

The cry of Modernisation in East, I fear,
Is but a pretence for imitation of the West.

Deploring the intellectual and spiritual poverty of the advocates of Westernisation and reform, Iqbal remarked:

Of thy conjurer-cup-bearers I have despaired,
Who in the assembly of the East have brought an empty ewer;
What new lightning can there be in these clouds,
When even the old lightning they possess no more?

Blind imitation of other people's cultural and intellectual

attitudes, customs and practices was totally unacceptable to Iqbal.. It was a matter of shame, he says, for any community to do so, to speak nothing of the one raised up for the leadership of the world.

He who in the world of creation is a creative man,
Round him Time does not cease to circumambulate;
Destroy not the worth of your Ego by imitation.
Protect it zealously for this pearl is unique;
Let that community go ahead with the cult of Modernism,
For which the nightly pleasures are ambition's end;
The cry of modernisation in East, I fear,
Is but a pretence for the imitation of the West.

Islamic countries that had reduced themselves to worthless pupils and imitators of the West while, in fact, these were intended to play the role of guides and leaders of humanity have been severely taken to task by Iqbal. Speaking, apparently, of the Turks he observed more in sorrow than in anger that:

Who could as the leaders of their age function,
The dotards, alas, have become its slaves.

Iqbal puts the following verses in the mouth of Prince Halim Pasha to describe the shallowness and superficiality of the Turkish Revolution and the intellectual crudeness and imitative character of its main architect, Kemal Ataturk:

Mustafa Kamal who sang of great renewal,
Said all the old annotations must be erased;
No new life into Ka'aba can be produced,
If new *Lat* and *Manat* from the West are imported,
No, the Turks have no new melody in their lute,
What they call new is only the old tune of Europe;
No new breath has entered into their breast,
No design of a new world is in their mind;
Turkey, perforce, goes along with the existing world,
Melted like wax in the flame of the world we know.

Iqbal had an undying faith in the inherent vitality of the Islamic *Shariat* and Civilisation and in the inexhaustible

possibilities they possessed of giving rise to a new world order. His presidential address to the All Parties Muslim Conference held in 1932 was illustrative of the sincerity of his conviction. It read:

> "The religion you follow lays great stress on the dignity of the individual and rears him up in such a way that he may spend everything he has for the sake of God and His creatures. This religion which is eternal has not exhausted its possibilities. It can still bring into existence a new world in which the poor can levy taxes on the rich and human society is founded not on the equality of the stomach but on the equality of the soul."

Modern Laboratory of Islam

It was felt sincerely by Iqbal that for the rejuvenation of Islamic society it was necessary that the Muslims should be provided with an independent homeland where the *Shariat* enjoyed a free hand and the Islamic way of life could blossom forth in all its glory, and since India possessed the largest Muslim population in the world it was (as he had argued in his presidential address delivered at the Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League in 1930) evidently the most appropriate place for making such an experiment. Here could that Islamic centre, or, rather, laboratory, be suitably set up where bold and daring experiments for living in accordance with the Islamic precepts in the modern world might be made, and a healthy social order established and where just and equitable solutions to the innumerable economic problems and difficulties plaguing mankind could be found and a harmonious integration sought between belief and practice, spiritualism and materialism, and the individual and society which could serve as a model for the rest of the world, particularly the Muslim World.

This lofty idealism reinforced with maturity of political outlook, an example of which could scarcely be found in any other part of the Islamic World, lay at the base of the demand for Pakistan which attained fulfilment in 1947. The founders

of Pakistan adopted it as the ideological groundwork of the new state and proclaimed to the world that their objective was to make the new state serve as a modern laboratory of Islam. Thus, on October 14, 1947, Mr. Jinnah declared:

> "The establishment of Pakistan for which we have been striving for the last ten years, is, by the Grace of God, an established fact today, but the creation of a state of our own was a means to an end and not the end in itself. The idea was that we should have a State in which we could live and breathe as free men and which we could develop according to our own lights and culture and where the principles of Islamic social justice could find free play."[1]

Similarly, said Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, at Rawalpindi on January 14, 1948:

> "Pakistan, for us, is a laboratory, and we will show to the world how good and effective the thirteen hundred year old teachings of Islam still are".

And, in 1950, he again said at Peshawar:

> "We had raised the demand for Pakistan so that it could be possible for Muslims to fashion their lives according to the precepts of Islam. We had insisted on the setting up of a laboratory where we could evolve a Government in the light of Islamic teachings which are still without a parallel in the world".

This delicate, epoch-making, experiment could, however, be successfully carried out only by men who had an unflinching faith in the eternity of the *Shariat* and in the intrinsic superiority of Islamic Civilisation. It was also necessary for them to be above suspicion in matters of earnestness and integrity of character so that motives of expediency or self-interest could, in no case, be imputed to them. Further, these leaders of thought and action should imperatively have been free and unchained, both mentally and spiritually, to the West. Only such people could push ahead the historic task who were blessed with enough

1. Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah (Speeches), p. 22

strength of faith, moral grit and ability to harness the forces set afloat by modern knowledge to their sublime ethical and spiritual objective and make them serve the needs of a modern Islamic society.

Critical Test

Sufficient care, anyhow, was not taken in the selection of men for making the best use of the opportunity that had come the way of Indian Muslims on account of diverse political and international reasons. There was also not enough time to train up the right kind of men, nor was it thought necessary to do so. In the upshot, leaders who were wholly the products of the Western educational system got called upon to guide the destinies of the infant Muslim State and from them, naturally, nothing better could be expected than what Pakistan is today. They could not give to the world anything beyond the structure of thought and life they had been brought up in. Just as you cannot condemn a tree for bearing its natural fruit, in the same way it will be futile and unjust to complain that the Western educational design did not furnish the new Islamic State of Pakistan with men of adequate faith, vision and missionary enthusiasm who instead of capitulating before the cultural and intellectual forms of the West and proceeding loyally to evolve their law, constitution and social order along the lines laid down by it could employ for the realisation of their moral, cultural and spiritual aspirations what was really sound and constructive in the Western pattern of life and in the enormous forces of mind and matter the modern sciences had unearthed.

The repudiation, in any case, by Pakistan of its fundamental objective in the excessive anxiety to fall in line with the secular ideal and the other so-called progressive views may turn out to be one of the most grievous tragedies of the modern age. It will administer a severe rebuff to the aspirations of Muslims all over the world so much so that it may not be possible for them to take up the experiment again. The outside world will also be tempted to conclude that the claims of Muslims about their religion

are just so many words which cannot stand the test of modern reality. The responsibility of Pakistan in this respect has been beautifully analysed by Wilfred Smith in these words:

> "Even if on second thoughts they may feel that the undertaking to build an Islamic society was more onerous than they once imagined, yet in a sense there is now no going back. Indeed, so far-reaching was the commitment, so overt and explicit the endeavour, that the significance and responsibility have grown inescapable. The history on which they have embarked will, deliberately or not, be Islamic. Whether they like it or regret it, the engagement is large, and has been undertaken—it cannot now be discarded or shelved. For a decision to drop the 'Islamic State' idea at this stage would be mere diversion. Rather, it would be a religious act, a deep conclusion. For it would involve a positive assertion by a great Muslim community that the Islamic ideal for society is irrelevant or unequal to the task of contemporary living; or, at least, that they as a people are unable so to interpret or implement it. Even without a forthright decision, merely a drift away from this ideal or from concern about it would, in fact, involve a reassessment of, and challenge to, and comment on, their faith."[1]

The Role of Jama'at-i-Islami in the Refutation of Western Values

However much we may differ in some of the interpretations of religious issues or concepts advanced by Maulana Abul A'la Maudoodi and other front-rank leaders of Jama'at-i-Islami it is impossible to deny the very valuable role they have played in the refutation of the Western cultural and ideological values and ideals. The literature produced by the Jama'at has rendered indisputable service in counteracting the overwhelming influence of the Western Civilisation over the modern educated classes and

1. Smith, W. C: Islam in Modern History (1957), p. 207

restoring their faith in the soundness, efficacy and practicability of the Islamic philosophy of life. Maulana Maudoodi has not followed the apologetic and defensive style of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his colleagues like Molvi Chiragh Ali and Syed Ameer Ali in India or Mufti Mohammad Abduh and his disciples in Egypt, but boldly attacked the very foundations of the Western cultural and intellectual edifice in the manner of Mohammad Asad and the other writers of the same group, and presented the teachings of Islam with greater confidence and in a positive and convincing style. Had Jama'at-i-Islami kept itself aloof, for a longer time, from political activities and devoted itself single-mindedly to the production of a healthy and forceful literature for the rising Muslim intelligentsia, and had Maulana Maudoodi been lucky enough to enlist the support of a few more scholars like himself in this endeavour, a great need of the modern times would have been fulfilled and it would have gone a long way in turning the fortunes of the battle that is being fought ceaselessly for the hearts and minds of men in the Muslim counrties in favour of Islam.

Role of Egypt

Egypt, after Mohammad Ali had driven away the French from its soil and given it back its freedom, became the third major theatre of intellectual, social and cultural conflict between the East and the West. The French occupation of Egypt was brief in terms of time, having lasted only for 3 years and 6 months, i.e., from July 1798 to September 1801. But its consequences went very far. The seeds of Western thought and civilisation were sown thoroughly and well on the soil of Egypt and the stage was set for a head-long clash between the Eastern and the Western ways of life. Scholars who were sent for higher studies to Europe, particularly to France, by the Khedives lost no time in passing on Western ideals and cultural concepts to their brethren at home. The Suez Canal connecting the Red Sea with the Mediterranean was completed during the reign of Ismail Pasha. Its construction had a revolutionary effect both

on internationat trade and politics. The gulf between the East and the West was narrowed down and a new channel was established for the interchange of good, as well as ideas, customs and practices.

Owing to a number of reasons Egypt was placed in a most happy position to work out an integration between the sciences and techniques developed by the West through incessant industry and the moral and spiritual foundations of a clean and successful life that are the real legacy of the Islamic East. A large part of this legacy had been inherited by the Egyptians. The paramountcy of Egypt's position in the sphere of the knowledge and study of the Arabic language and literature and of the theological sciences of Islam, coupled with the abundant facilities of publicity and propagation which included the presence of the University of Azhar (the foremost seat of Islamic learning in the world), and the innate mental resiliency of its people and their knack for cultural accommodation could make it the fittest vehicle for the augmentation and dissemination of its priceless Islamic heritage. It could set a worthy example of give-and-take between the Islamic and the Western Worlds, and strike a bargain between the two civilisations to the advantage of the whole of mankind.

A New Suez

Egypt could have built a new channel far more beneficial to the world and a thousand times more decisive for the future of mankind than the Suez. It was the channel of contact and communication between the materially and technologically advanced yet baffled, confused and morally and spiritually drained out West and the backward and underdeveloped yet composed and self-possessed East, blessed as it was with the wealth of inner contentment and tranquillity. Thanks to Divine religions and to the last of the Divine messages, Islamic Egypt could have evolved a happy co-ordination between the terrific material resources of the West that are devoid of a higher purpose and the lofty moral and spiritual ideals of the East that are starved of material competence, between the West which can but

does not want to act, and the East which wants but does not have the means to act. The West and the East would then have exchanged with each other what they possessed and pressed forward jointly for the progress and welfare of humanity like two real brothers. Had this two-way intellectual and cultural traffic between the Occident and the Orient been established a new era would have opened in the history of our race and Egypt would have assumed the leadership of the world by virtue of its contribution.

But such a thing could be possible only if Egypt had the courage and idealism to dedicate itself to its spiritual mission as soon as its initial contact with West had been established and to undergo willingly the attendant trials and hardships. It all depended on whether it could assimilate the modern sciences and turn them to its advantage in the pursuit of the objective it was far better qualified to attain than the rest of the Muslim World.

Imitative Conduct

Various political and other factors combined to hold back Egypt from exerting its influence over the West and assuming the role of leadership. It, on the contrary, was reduced to the position of a poor camp-follower of the Western World. So far as intellectual and cultural cargo was concerned, it used the new line of communication established with the West only for purposes of import. In the bargain, its personality became stunted, its soul got shrivelled,and the normal process of its growth and development was retarded.

Among these the most important reason was the political situation that prevailed in Egypt and the whole of the Islamic World during the Nineteenth Century. Directly or indirectly, all the Muslim countries of the Middle East had come under the sway of Western Imperialism which gave the Muslim leaders and intellectuals little time to think of anything else. The one big reality of foreign domination had pushed all other problems into the background.

Syed Jamaluddin Afghani

Syed Jamaluddin Afghani had a forceful personality and a mind remarkable in many ways. He had travelled widely in Europe and made a close study of its people. But, in spite of the immense popularity he enjoyed, his life and work are shrouded in mystery; he has become something of an enigma. Divergent views and activities are attributed to him. What is left of his own writings and speeches, together with the accounts furnished by his disciples of his sayings and doings, throw a most unsatisfactory light on his life and ideas and it is difficult to conclude on their basis about his attitude towards the West and its civilisation. But Iqbal held him in the highest esteem. He thought that had Jamaluddin Afghani not frittered away his energies on so many things, he could have succeeded better than the rest of his contemporaries in dispelling the intellectual bewilderment the ascendency of the West had produced in the World of Islam and forging an active and operative link between the widely separated conceptual, moral, and spiritual values of Islam and the downright materialistic norms of the modern Western society. His versatile mind and his creative genius, in Iqbal's view, made him eminently suited to the task. He had a natural aptitude for it. Thus, of him, Iqbal writes:

> "The task of a modern Muslim is (therefore) immense. He has to rethink the whole system of Islam without completely breaking with the past. Perhaps the first Muslim who felt the urge of a new spirit was Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi. The man, however, who fully realised the importance and immensity of the task, and whose deep insight into the inner meaning of the history of Muslim thought and life, combined with a broad vision engineered by his wide experience of men and matters would have made him a living link between the past and the future, was Jamaluddin Afghani. If his indefatigable but divided energy could have been devoted entirely to Islam, as a system of human belief and conduct, the world of Islam, intellectually speaking,

would have been on a much more solid ground today."[1]

Anyway, because of the situation obtaining in the Muslim World, in general, and in Egypt, in particular—which he had made the centre of his activities—Jamaluddin Afghani, despite his extraordinary intellect and passionate devotion to Islam and his Afghan pride and enthusiasm, could scarcely devote himself to anything besides the liquidation of foreign domi- nation and political revival and integration of Muslim countries. Politics remained his major preoccupation. His famous pupil Mohammad Abduh, has summed up his struggle in these words:

> "So far as his political objective is concerned, which became a passion with him and in the pursuit of which he spent the whole of his life and bore immeasurable suffering and made gallant sacrifices, it lay in the resuscitation of the Muslim empire so that it could take its stand against the most advanced nations of the world and be a source of real strength and glory to Islam. The breaking of the British hold over the East formed an important plank of this programme."[2]

As for Mohammad Abduh himself, while acknowledging the valuable services rendered by him in the cause of Islam,[3] it would be necessary to stress the fact that he was also among the pioneers of the modernist movement in the Arab World. He gave a powerful call for the reinterpretation of Islam in order to make it conform to the requirements of the Twentieth Century society. His ideas and writings bear a heavy imprint of Western ideals. In this respect, there is little to choose between him and Sir Syed

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1 Iqbal: Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam (1930), p. 136

2. Ahmad Amin : *Z'aama'-ul-Islah Fil Asril Hadees*, p. 106

3. Two of his books deserve particularly to be mentioned in this connection : *Risalatut Tauhid* and *El-Eslam wal Nasraniya Fil I Im wal Madniya*

Ahmad Khan.[1] The modernist trend can be discerned easily in his commentary of the Quran, his theological fiat- and other writings. The protagonists of modernism who came after him have drawn liberally upon his works.

Effects

Jamaluddin Afghani's political activities shut out for him the other avenues of fruitful endeavour and for a man of his vision and sensitiveness he could make little positive contribution to the reconstruction of Islamic life and society. The opportunity to lay the foundations of a new school of thought in the light of his intimate study and critical evolution of Western Civilisation which could cope with the challenge of time did not come his way.

Nevertheless, he was not unsuccessful in reviving and strengthening in the Muslim intelligentsia reverence for Islam and a living faith in the soundness and universality of its message. He belongs to the select band of men who have wielded the greatest influence on the rising Muslim generations in the modern times. The most striking part of his achievements is that he arrested the advance of the educated Egyptian youth towards atheism. His writings have, definitely, played a part in the preservation of the intellectual effects of Islam among the Muslim intelligentsia and in keeping its spiritual allegiance alive in however restricted a manner. Carl Brocklemann says:

> "The spiritual life of Egypt was ruled over by Islam in the past, and so it is up to now. This is due largely to an Iranian, Jamaluddin Afghani, who, for political reasons, preferred to associate himself with Afghanistan where he had spent his youth and to describe himself as a native of it."[2]

1. With the difference that Mohammad Abduh had a very deep knowledge of Arabic language and literature and theological sciences while Sir Syed's knowledge of them was rather superficial. (See also Earl Cromer's Modern Egypt, Part II, p. 8)

2. *Geschich e der Islamischen* by Velker und Staaten, Munchen-Berlin, 1939

Forerunners of Western Thought

The Egyptian young men who were the cream and the most precious asset of the whole community would first learn the modern sciences in their own country and then proceed to more important centres of learning in Europe for further education. They would learn in the Western environment how to be critical in their approach, liberal in their ideas and objective in their outlook. They were instructed in the virtues of moral courage and intellectual integrity and were warned against the folly of swallowing anything without subjecting it to painstaking scrutiny. Of these Oriental Muslim scholars, who had been born and brought up in an important Islamic country and religious and literary centre like Egypt and studied the Holy Quran, it could he expected legitimately that from among them would come up men who would be charged with a strong feeling of disgust against the weaknesses of Western thought and civilisation—against the West's vulgar emphasis on materialism, its exaggerated sense of nationalism and its severely circumscribed concepts of man, mind and spirit—and imbued with a genuine Islamic enthusiasm, sense of self-respect and love for the loftier values of human life and culture, and who could be relied upon to rise in revolt against the hollowness and artificiality of the Western way of life and produce Islamic redeemers and revolutionaries of the calibre of Iqbal and Mohammad Ali. Indeed, as the things stood, Egypt and the other Arab lands ought to have given rise to a much greater number of such rebels and crusaders against the intellectual and cultural dominance of the West than all the non-Arab and non-Muslim countries put together. But, critics of the West of the stature of Iqbal and Mohammad Ali were not to be found among the Arabs. Both of these extraordinary sons of Islam had spent their lives in a heavily un-Islamic environment, far away from the springheads of Islam; their blood was Indian blood and the land of their birth had never developed a real acquaintance with the Arabic language and civilisation—yet from the furnace of the West they had emerged as burnished gold. These Western-educated Arab

young men, on the other hand, assumed, generally, the role of impassioned advocates of the Western norms of life as they returned home after completing their studies in Europe, and strove, in various ways, to push forward the general mass of their countrymen on the road they had chosen.

The Earl of Cromer, more than whom no Westerner has striven for the reconstruction of Egypt in such a way that while retaining a nominal link with Islam it may, in reality, be a slave to Western ideals and values, has furnished a penetrative study of the ideological, mental and moral state of this class of Egyptians and shown how from the "educational mill" of the West there has rolled forth a human species which is neither fully Muslim nor fully Western. Cromer has also brought out the difference between the Christian skeptics of the West and the Muslim skeptics of the East with great skill and accuracy. He writes:

> "...........in as much as Egyptian society is in a state of flux the natural result has been to produce a class of individuals many of whom are, at the same time, de-Moslemised Moslems and invertebrate Europeans. Nominally, the Europeanised Egyptian in the majority of cases is a Moslem. In reality, he is generally an Agnostic. The gulf between him and the *'Alim* of the El-Azhar University is as great as between the *'Alim* and the European."[1]
>
> "The truth is," Cromer goes on to say, "that, in passing through the European educational mill, the young Egyptian Moslem loses his Islamism, or, at all events, he loses the best part of it. He cuts himself adrift from the sheet-anchor of his creed. He no longer believes that he is always in the presence of his Creator, to whom he will some day have to render an account of his actions. He may still, however, take advantage of the least worthy portions of his nominal religion, those portions, namely, which in so far as they tolerate a lax moral code, adopt themselves to his tastes and

1. The Earl of Cromer : Modern Egypt (1908), Vol. II, pp. 228-29

to his convenience in the affairs of this world. Moreover, in losing his Islamism, the educated Egyptian very rarely makes an approach towards Christianity."[1]

And, further:

"Far ahead is the case of the Egyptian free-thinker. He finds himself launched on a troubled sea without any rudder and without any pilot. Neither his past history nor his present associations impose any effective moral restraint on him. He finds that, amongst many of his own countrymen, the cause of religion is often identified with opposition to the most reasonable reforms, and in trampling indignantly on the particular religion which can lead to such results, he is disposed to cast aside religion altogether. Having cut himself loose from his creed, no barrier, save that of cynical self-interest, serves to keep him within the limits of a moral code which is in some degree imposed on the European, whose system he is endeavouring to copy. The society in which he moves does not seriously condemn untruthfulness and deceit. The social stigma with which vice of various kinds is visited is too feeble to exercise much practical effect. As he leaves the creed of his forefathers, he casts no lingering look behind. He not only leaves it, but he spurns it. He rushes blind-folded into the arms of European civilisation, unmindful of the fact that what is visible to the eye constitutes merely the outward signs of that civilisation, whilst the deep-seated ballast of Christian morality, which regulates the occasional eccentric movements of the vessel, is hidden beneath the surface, and is difficult of acquisition by the pseudo-European imitator of the European system. He calls Heaven to witness that he has cast aside all prejudices based on religion, so that he despises the teachings of his forefathers. See, he says to the European, I have my railways, my schools, my newspapers, my law-courts and all the other things which, as I can

1. The Earl of Cromer : Modern Egypt (1901), Vol. II, p. 229

plainly see, go to make up your boasted civilisation: in what, then, I am inferior to you? Alas! the de-Moslemised Moslem, although, he is wholly unaware of the defect, is inferior in one respect wherein his inferiority cannot be removed by one stroke of the pen, for the civilised European, as we understand him, though he may not be an orthodox Christian, is in spite of himself to a great extent the outcome of Christianity, and would not be what he is had he not 1900 years of Christanity behind him."[1]

Movement for the Emancipation of Women in Egypt

An unmistakable proof of the social and cultural impact made by the West on the Egyptian mind is found in the writings of Qasim Amin, a front-rank leader of the movement for the freedom of women in his country, more specially, in his books entitled *Tahrir-ul-Mara'at*[2] (Women's Freedom) and *El-Mara'at-ul-Jadida*[3] (The Modern Woman).

In *Tahrir-ul-Mara'at* Qasim Amin advances the claim that "there is nothing in the abolition of *purdah* which may be opposed to the teaching of Islam", and, then, goes on to say: "The Islamic *Shariat* is the name of a few fundamental truths and general checks and restraints. Had its habit been to go into the details of the laws it would have ceased to be a universal legal system for all peoples and at all times. The injunctions of the *Shariat* which are based upon current usage and contemporary issues can be amended according to the needs and circumstances of the time. What it insists upon simply is that the amendments do not violate against the general foundations enunciated by it."[4]

The discussion in the book centres around four topics: *purdah*, the active participation of women in the different walks

1. The Earl of Cromer : Modern Egypt (1908), Vol. II, p. 232
2. Published in 1899
3. Published in 1900
4. p. 169

of life, polygamy and divorce. On all these issues the author has adopted the Western standpoint and claimed for it to be the standpoint of Islam.

Qasim Amin's Westward-looking mentality is more noticeable in his other book, *El-Mara'at-ul-Jadida*. In it he has adopted the Western style of reasoning which rejects all truths and convictions that are not realisable in experience even though they may be based on religion. This is what the Westerners describe as the scientific method. In the end, Qasim Amin makes out a strong case for the emulation of the Western social and cultural norms and traditions. He castigates the Egyptians for glorifying the past and taking pride in their old culture and civilisation in these words:

> "This is our real ailment which needs be eradicated first of all. The only way to get rid of it is that we should make our younger generations acquainted more and more with Western Civilisation and its conditions and circumstances so that in due course (which is not going to be a long drawn one, in any case) the reality may unveil itself before them like the blazing sun. We will then realise the value and importance of Western Civilisation and see for ourselves that no reform is possible unless it is based on modern Western knowledge and that all human affairs, whether moral or material, must be subservient to the dictates of reason and learning. That is why, we find that all the civilised communities of the modern times, however different they may be in race, language, nationality and religion, are very much similar to each other in matters of political organisation, government and administration, family-structure, education, language, script and architecture, and even in such minor things as dress, mode of greeting, food and drink. For this very reason we project the people of the West as a symbol of perfection, insist on their veneration as an ideal, and, appeal to our countrymen to study the position and status of the Western women."[1]

1. pp. 180-82

The two books attained great popularity in the progressive sections of Egypt and, thanks to them, a strong urge was created among the Egyptian women for equality and emancipation and for discarding the *purdah*. Mixed gatherings of men and women became common and Egyptian women and girl students began to undertake voyages freely to Europe and America. Writes Prof. Mohammad Husain:

> "Religious-minded Muslims were greatly perturbed over the trend of freedom and immodesty the movement had bred among women. They objected vigorously to the revolution that was taking place in the lives of women. They were aghast at the growing intolerance of the authority of the father and the husband and of the other established customs and practices and looked with dismay at the unprecedented haste with which the women were discarding the loose and modest Egyptian dresses in favour of the tight and short European ones."[1]

Echo of Orientalists in Egypt

The spirit of the West had been imbibed so wholeheartedly by the European educated Arab scholars that they even thought with the Western mind and, so to say, breathed with the Western lungs. They served as the carbon copies of their Orientalist mentors and with the fervour of new converts propagated in their countries the strange notions and concepts they had learnt from them. No new idea was ever thrown up by an Orientalist that failed to enlist the support of a dutiful drum-beater in Egypt, whether it was the repudiation of the Divine origin of the Quran or the separation of politics from religion or the theory that Islam was merely a system of belief, morality and worship which could have nothing to do with state-craft[2] or the ideology of

1. *El-ittijahatul Wataniyah Fi Adabil Mu'asir.*

2. A book entitled, *El-Islam wa-Usool-ul-Hukam*, has been written in the exposition of this viewpoint by an Egyptian scholar from the Azhar University, Sheikh Ali Abdul Razik, who at that time, was also holding the post of

[*Continued on next page*

secularism or the denial of the authenticity of the primary sources of Arabic language and literature or the rejection of the Traditions and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet or the mistrust of their genuineness, importance and utility or the abolition of the *purdah* system and recognition of complete freedom and equality of women in all walks of life or the notion that Islamic jurisprudence was based upon the Roman law and carried its imprint or the revival of ancient, pre-Islamic civilisations in Muslim countries like the Age of the Pharaohs in Egypt or the employment of local dialects for literary purposes and the adoption of the Latin script or the acceptance of the Western laws as the standard-yards of legislation or the eulogisation of the concepts of nationalism, socialism and even Marxism (which have been gaining steadily in popularity with the Muslim World during recent years). In all these matters one would find the Western mental and cultural attitudes spreading their wings over Arab thought and expression. The following observations made by a first-rank Orientalist of the present day are highly significant :

> "In any case, the point of immediate importance for us is that, though these are amongst the most striking examples of the impact of Western Europe upon Islam, the future of Westernisation and the part it will play in the Moslem World does not depend upon any of these exterior adaptations. The outward forms are subsidiary; here even more in the

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Shara-i-Qazi (Judge). This book was greeted with a storm of protest by the religious circles of Egypt with the result that Sheikh Abdul Razik was deprived of his Azhar diploma and other honours. Its persual shows that the views of the Orientalists had infiltrated so deep into the educated classes than even Muslim theologists were ready to propagate them in a missionary spirit. The author claims that "the Caliphate was only a popular institution of the age which the Muslims too had adopted. The *Shariat* does not make it binding upon them." He seeks to prove that "the Caliphate and other executive, administrative and judicial offices and institutions are purely of a temporal nature which neither command any religious significance nor is the *Shariat* associated with them in any way."

material things, the more perfect the outward imitation, the less is the interior assimilation, since with the more thorough grasp of the spirit and the principle underlying the outward forms there will usually be linked a perception of the adaptations required by the local circumstances. Many of the existing Western institutions may be swept away, and yet the Moslem world may be no less westernised than before, perhaps even more so. If we are to find the real measure of the influence exerted by the Western culture upon Islam, we must look beneath the surface, and in the first place for ideas and movements based upon a creative assimilation of Western thought after intensive inner preparation. All the rest is superficial."[1]

Imitative Arab Scholarship

Arab writers and scholars could have been of real service to their people had they concentrated on transferring the standard works on scientific and technological subjects into Arabic language as it had been done in Japan where by making available to their countrymen in their own language the latest knowledge developed in the West the Japanese scholars had opened the way for phenomenal industrial progress so that today it can hold its own against the most advanced countries of the world. The Arab men of letters, on the contrary, shut their eyes to the shocking poverty of Arabic language in material and technological sciences. Instead of doing something about it, they confined their endeavour strictly to literature, social sciences and philosophy and for inspiration they looked up solely to the writings of the Western merchants of atheism, intellectual unrest and social disorder. They have, consequently, pushed the Islamic countries into a state of mental frustration and moral anarchy, hitherto unknown to them, and have weakened further their national personality and character and produced in them an utterly unnecessary ideological conflict and a thoroughly

1. A. R. Gibb : Whither Islam ? pp , 328-29

futile and wasteful struggle among the different sets of values and schools of thought.

Some of the most celebrated Arab writers whose literary prowess is recognised throughout the Arab World have participated in the popularisation of Western ideals and social institutions in their lands. But where the empirical sciences and technology are concerned, not only Egypt,but the whole of the Arab World,has failed to produce even one man who may have won international recognition or whose contribution should have been considered worthy of note by the scientists of the West. To quote Bernard Lewis:

> "There has been no real development of original scientific work, such as exists in Japan, China and India, and each generation of students must draw again from the sources of the West, which has, meanwhile, itself been making immense progress. The result is that the disparity in scientific knowledge, technological capacity, and, therefore, of military power between the Middle East and the advanced countries of the West is greater now than a hundred or fifty years ago, when the whole process of Westernisation began."[1]

Typical Representatives

Some distinguished Egyptian scholars and social philosophers urged their people to imbibe the Western Civil'sation as their ultimate cultural and intellectual ideal. The influence of Western Civilisation gained in strength day by day—Egypt kept on moving steadily towards the West—and the time did not seem far off when the educated and more prosperous sections of the Egyptian population would become the typical representatives of the Western philosophy of life. Egypt, indeed, had made such rapid strides towards the goal of Westernisation that, in 1938, it was described by Taha Hussain as the most striking showpiece of the Western Civilisation in the East. He wrote:

'Our material life (at the higher social levels) is

1. 'Ecounter', October, 1963

thoroughly Westernised. At the other levels, too, it is influenced by the Western life-patterns according to the circumstances and the standard of living of the people concerned. Classes which possess better means and enjoy a higher standard of living are more Westernised than those that are less fortunate. This shows that the Egyptian ideal of material and wordly life is the same as the Western ideal............"

"Our inner life, also, with all the difference in its outward manifestations, is wholly Westernised. Our system of Government is purely Western. We have borrowed it from Europe lock, stock and barrel. Our only fault is that we have been rather slow in importing political and governmental concepts and institutions from the West............

"Look at education. What has been its foundation and structure for the last one hundred years? Purely Western. There can be no two opinions about it. We cast our children exclusively in the Western mould at all the stages of education—primary, secondary and higher. We do not allow any other factor to come near them.............."

Taha Husain went on to conclude:

"All these things indicate that, today, we seek an ever-increasing contact and identity with the West till we become a part of it, apparently as well as truly, in form as well as in substance."[1]

Egypt—A Part of Europe

From a man of Taha Husain's[2] accomplishments and commanding a place of pride in the world of literature as he does,

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1. *Mustaqbil-us-Thaqafat Fi Misr*, pp. 31-36.

2. Taha Husain is the tallest figure in Arabic literature. With the youth he has become almost a craze, the younger writers look upon him as their mentor and inspirer. No one, perhaps, has influenced the rising generations of the Middle East more powerfully than him. He is regarded as the founder of a new literary style, which, though some of the critics and

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and who had also learnt the Quran by heart in his childhood and kept it under regular study and who had been a student of Azhar and read very extensively and witnessed with his own eyes the lament- able weaknesses of the modern materialistic civilisation, its arrogant denial of God and militant nationalism, and listened to its honest and detached criticism by impartial Western obser-vers themselves, and, further, who had been a keen student of Islamic history and of the life of the sacred Prophet, it could

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literateurs frown upon, is remarkable for its simplicity, chastity and classical elegance.

Taha Husain was born in Egypt in 1889. He lost his eye-sight in early childhood, but his spirit remained unsubdued. He learnt the Quran by heart in a *Maktab* and then joined the Azhar where he studied for sometime. But, as we learn from his writings, he did not feel at home at these places. He found their atmosphere oppressive. After completing his studies at the University of Egypt he went to Paris from where he took the degree of Doctorate in Literature. On returning home, he was appointed a Professor in the Literary College of the University of Egypt Later, he rose to be its Principal from which post he resigned to devote himself wholly to writing. In 1949, he became his country's Minister of Education and was awarded the title of Pasha. His better known works include *Fil Sher il-Jahili*, *Fil Adab il-Jahili*, *Zikra abil 'Ala'*, *el-Ayyam* and *Mustaqbal us Thaqafat Fi Misr*.

His unorthodox views evoked a strong resentment in the religious and literary circles of Egypt. To make up for the follies of the post or because of advancing years or due solely to the Grace of God, for some years he has been working exclusively on the lives of the holy Companions and has produced some really valuable books in the line, such as, *Ali Hamish-as-Seereat* and *El. W'ad-el-Huq*.

Taha Husain is an ardent admirer of Western philosophy and civilisa-tion, and, in particular of French culture and literature. To France he owes a deep intellectual allegiance. He married a French lady and his children have received their entire education in France. He enjoys an excellent command over the French language and has translated a number of French literary masterpieces into Arabic His writings bear the mark of the Western Orientalists and he has displayed an exceptional aptitude for developing and propagating their favourite notions. Intellectual curiosity, spiritual restlessness and excessive fondness for the new and the original are the outstanding traits of his personality.

be expected that he would call upon the Egyptians to stand upon their own legs culturally and intellectually, to develop their personality according to their own lights and to carry ahead the glorious message of Islam God had blessed them with centuries ago. Such a course would have enabled Egypt to assume the leadership of the world. Even if Egypt was a part of Europe and a member of the family of Western Civilisation, the duty of a high-minded Egyptian Muslim would have lain in exhorting his country men to prove themselves worthy of the Islamic message and to carve out, through it, a place for Egypt on the map of the world for Divine revelations which are meant for all mankind, everywhere, are much more precious, comprehensive and perma nent than the civilisations that rise and prosper from time to time. Divine messages are independent of the frontiers of geography, the cycle of time does not affect them and they are above and beyond the reach of the processes of history. If the Egyptian intellectuals had done that, if they had stood up as the crusaders of Islam, they could have become the heralders and precursors of a truly solid religious awakening and of a wholesome and genuine revolution which starting from Egypt would have spread over the entire Arab World.

But the Islamic society in which Taha Husain opened his eyes had grown exceedingly weak and decrepit on account of the malevolent inroads made by Western Civilisation. He, therefore, 'prefaced' his rejuvenating activities with the call that Egypt should consider itself to be a part of the West. He pressed all his redoubtable mental capabilities and deep knowledge of history and literature to prove that the intellectual springs of Egypt and the Western World were the same or very much alike: Egypt was as close to Greek as it was removed from Oriental thought, it had never been eroded by the civilisation of a foreign people from the earliest times and from the age of the Pharaohs to the present day, and neither the Persians had made any impression on it (who had been in occupation of Egypt for some time) nor the Greeks, Arabs and Muslims (who ruled over it for centuries). According to him, if the Egyptian mind

had ever been influenced by the cultural and intellectual currents emanating from a particular region, the credit for it went solely to the Mediterranean zone. It was only with the races dwelling in that part of the world that the Egyptians had carried on the business of mental and cultural give-and-take.[1] He says:

> "Nothing can be more false and stupid than to consider Egypt a part of the East or Egyptian thought to be Oriental in its origin like that of China or India."[2]

This, in sum, is the basis on which Taha Husain wants his countrymen to emulate Western Civilisation and to act as partners of the Western people in their social and cultural heritage. He writes:

> "We should follow the way of the Europeans and adopt their habits, customs and manners so that we may be their equals and partners in all the aspects of civilisation, good as well as bad, sweet as well as sour, desirable as well as detestable."

> "We must convince the European that we look at life from the same angle as he does, our evaluation of things is not different from his evaluation, and we hold the same opinions about them as a Westerner holds."[3]

Intellectual Degradation

It is distressingly hard to believe that a man of Taha Husain's education and culture could descend to the level of such a shameless advocacy and championship of an alien civilisation. He should have proved himself superior to the slavish attitude of imitation of the West to the extent of losing one's own identity, and of judging the sublime, moral and spiritual ideals and obligations solely by the strictly limited Western material and sociological standards and on the grounds, simply, of ancient history. As compared to him, we find quite a few leaders and philoso-

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1. *Mustaqbil-us-Thaqafat Fi Misr*, p. 22
2. *Ibid.*, p. 41
3. *Ibid* , p. 44

phers of non-Muslim countries operating on a much higher intellectual and spiritual plane. Displaying exceptional foresight and understanding they have refused to compromise the universality of ethical and spiritual values with the limitations laid down by geography or culture or with the fictitious lines of demarcation drawn between the ancient and the modern and rejected all the narrow and sterile notions which divide the human family into separate racial, national and cultural compartments or between the East and the West. From a Muslim Arab thinker this depth of vision and universality of outlook was to be expected in a much greater degree for the huge, shady tree under which he is brought up belongs neither to the East nor to the West but to the whole of mankind.

Ikhwan Movement

Notwithstanding all this, the need remained for a sustained and concentrated effort against the mounting influence of Western Civilisation. A crusading campaign was called for and mere emotional allegiance to Islam was not enough. A deeper and stronger faith and a more solid conviction in Islamic values and teachings, as against the concepts floated by the West, was required. A struggle of this nature could, of necessity, neither be confined to politics, as Jamaluddin Afghani had sought, nor conceived in a purely defensive manner, as Mohammad Abduh had done.

Had the *Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen* movement of Egypt developed at a steady pace and the leaders of Islamic thought in the countries of the Middle East given to it their unqualified support[1] it could have fulfilled the mission of Jamaluddin Afghani and Mohammad Abduh by working out an Islamic renaissance in West Asia.

Doubts have, however, been expressed about the competence

1. Like, for instance, Abdul Qadir Audah Shaheed, Syed Qutub Shaheed, Mohammed Qutub, Mohammad Ghazali, Dr. Saeed Ramadan, Dr. Mustafa as-Sabai.

of the *Ikhwan* to accomplish this task. The amount of success it achieved, with its limitations, in the realisation of the great objective it had set before itself is also open to controversy. It would seem proper here to refer to the views expressed by W.C. Smith, who can, by no stretch of imagination, be described as an ardent admirer of the movement. He writes:

> "To regard the *Ikhwan* as purely reactionary would, in our judgement, be false. For there is at work in it also a praiseworthy constructive endeavour to build a modern society on a basis of justice and humanity, as an extrapolation from the best values that have been enshrined in the tradition from the past. It represents in part a determination to sweep aside the degeneration into which Arab society has fallen, the essentially unprincipled social opportunism interlaced with individual corruption; to get back to a basis of society of accepted moral standards and integrated vision and to go forward to a programme of active implementation of popular goals by an effectively organised corps of disciplined and devoted idealists. It represents in part a determination to sweep aside the inactive reverence for an irrelevant, static, purely transcendental ideal; and to transform Islam from the sentimental enthusiasm of purely inert admirers or the antiquated preserve of professional traditionalists tied in thought and practice to a bygone age, into an operative force actively at work on modern problems."[1]
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> "These are important developments. Without them, or something to take their place, Arab society, in our judgement, cannot, in fact, proceed. Without some accepted moral and driving force, some effective inspiration directed to concrete opportunities, even the best social and national programme will remain on paper and Arab life will continue a romantic debacle. It is in the cogency of this answer to some of the community's most fundamental problems

1. Islam in Modern History, (1957), pp. 156-57

that part of the *Ikhwan's* appeal has lain. Until some other group has emerged with a comparably effective willingness to deal with these issues, one may be sure that the *Ikhwan* may, despite suppression, endure. So far, apart from the Communists, they are the only party to produce aims and ideals able to call forth on any effective scale more than mere lip-service."

But, as misfortune would have it, the leaders of *Ikhwan* decided a little too early to step down into the arena of active politics, and, this coupled with the coming into power of the self-appointed champions of socialism and Arab nationalism in Egypt, who lost no time in crushing it down ruthlessly, deprived the Arab countries and, eventually, the entire Islamic World, of the services of what unmistakably was the most powerful Islamic movement of modern times and a fast progressing religious endeavour. The liquidation of the *Ikhwan* was, without a doubt, an irreparable loss to the Arab and the larger Muslim World.

A Modern Arab Edition of the Kemalist Movement

Exotic cultural concepts and materialistic philosophies and movements of the West were being imported freely into Egypt. Its leading intellectuals had dedicated themselves unequivocally to their propagation. The university students and the younger army officers vied with each other in their imitative zeal. Everyone discontended with the existing order was anxious to welcome what the West offered. Innumerable books were written in support of the need to Westernise which were hurriedly read by immature minds. The West-oriented ideas became something of a dogma with them. The Egyptian youth looked upon them as the only way to national salvation and to the attainment of a place of equality among the so-called progressive nations of the world. The prevalent system of education, the entire structure of training and upbringing, and topical literature—none of these could place before it an ideal different from and more sublime and effective than the worn-

out ideas and methods Kemal Ataturk had put across in Turkey. The Egyptian intelligentsia had made up its mind to adopt the Kemalist movement *in toto* after substituting Turkish nationalism with Arab nationalism and adding socialism to it which had not acquired much popularity during the days of Ataturk. It now only lay in wait for an opportunity to seize power in the Arab World so that it could put into practice its favourite ideologies.

In the circumstances, the Egyptian revolution of July 23, 1952 could be nothing but a striking success. All those who in Egypt had grown sick of the prevalent socio-political arrangement and wanted to see their country strong, free and prosperous responded to it from the core of their hearts. Different sections of public opinion began to entertain different hopes from it. It was quite possible for the Revolution to bring back Egypt to its true moorings and to invest it with the leadership of the Muslim World. It could have paved the way for its real progress and glory and called into order a way of life that was in harmony with the religious sentiments of the Egyptian people and the natural disposition of the Islamic World about which it is the Will of God that it will be united and strengthened solely through the agency of religion—a way of life that would also have been representative of the genuine needs and urges of the modern age which had outgrown the inhibitions of race, country and language. The world had a right to expect from the Arabs a more enlightened lead and more advanced ideology than that of Arab nationalism ; it longed for a wiser and a more realistic and constructive guidance from the architects of the Egyptian revolution. In this, however, it was sorely disappointed.

Metamorphosis of Egyptian and Arab Society

Soon it was evident that the Egyptian revolution had brought with it a complete programme of life, conceived on the foundations of communism and materialistic nationalism, for a total metamorphosis of the Egyptian, and, through it, the entire Arab society. Its object was the creation of a new society

which, as President Nasser has put it in the National Manifesto of May 31, 1962, "may choose for itself such social norms on which modern ethical values can be built up and be capable of giving expression to a new national culture"[1]—a society "believing in freedom, unity and socialism to be the bases of life and the primary objectives of human endeavour",[2] and seeking the sources of Egyptian struggle in the Age of the Pharaohs which heralded the dawn of Arab and human civilisation,"[3] and which "regards the unity of the Arab nation as the ultimate goal of its struggle, and, according to which, the unity of the Arabs is derived from the oneness of history, language and aspirations. Similarity of language breeds similarity of thought, identity of history breeds identity of conscience, and community of hopes and aspirations holds the guarantee of a unified future."[4]

As for Islam which is the religion of all Arabs, with the exception of a very small minority, the revolutionary leadership of Egypt holds it to be similar to so many other faiths found in the world ; it places all of them at the same level, and believing equally in their innate vitality and effectiveness considers itself to be responsible for the preservation of the whole lot of them. As President Nasser says, "Reverence for religious freedom must be maintained in our new existence. Eternal spiritual values born out of the various religions possess unbounded potentialities for the guidance of man, for the illumination of his life with the radiance of faith and for the promotion of love, virtue and truth."[5]

The leaders of the revolution are addicted so much to looking at everything from the materialistic point of view that even religious beliefs carry importance with them only so far

1. *Al-Mithak-ul-Watani*—Chapter 1 (*Nazra-tun-Aama*).
2. *Ibid*
3. *Ibid.*—Chapter III
4. *Ibid.*—Chapter IV
5. *Ibid.*, Chapter V

as their practical utility, revolutionary possibilities and the role they can play in history are concerned. Transcendental truths and abstract beliefs, like belief in the life to come, make no impression on them. They just do not put their faith in anything that exists beyond the realm of time and space. Thus, the National Manifesto of President Nasser reads:

> "Divine faiths, basically, are human revolutions whose fundamental aim is the promotion of the dignity and prosperity of man, and it is the foremost duty of all theologians to safeguard this essence and reality of religion."[1]

President Nasser's concept of the modern Arab society and of the individual and his rights is determined not by the standards laid down by the the Islamic *Shariat*, but by the ideals made popular by modern Western social philosophy and organisation. Women, according to him, are entitled to compete equally with men; it is essential that the "ancient taboos and restraints" that put a limit on their activities and prevented the full and free development of their personality should be removed so that they can play a positive role in building the edifice of life."[2]

Even if we ignore the questions of detail, it is obvious that the mind operating behind the National Manifesto is purely materialistic. If the words, 'Arab' and 'Egypt', which occur frequently in the manifesto are to be deleted, it will be impossible to distinguish whether it is meant for a Muslim society and an Arab country or a wholly secular and socialist state for such states, too, believe in the freedom of conscience and are ready to acknowledge the powerful influence exerted by religious and spiritual values on human civilisation.

The new Egyptian leaders took a number of well-calculated steps towards the radical transformation of the Egyptian outlook and social structure which, in fact, were intended to serve as a

1. *Al-Mithak-ul-Watani*, Chapter VII
2. *Ibid.*, Chapter VII

prelude to the social and intellectual transformation of the entire Arab world. They insisted on Arab nationalism as an article of faith ; the theoreticians of the revolution preached it as the ultimate ideal which was to be held aloft as the most valuable national and cultural heritage of the past. Some of them, actually, went so far as to cry out in exultation : "We are Arabs and the sons of Pharaohs". The name, Pharaoh, ceased to be a symbol of shame and repugnance, as the Quran has taught us and we, as Muslims, always and everywhere, have believed. The terms 'Arab' and 'Arabism' were linked up with the name of God, and the slogan, 'Glory is for Allah and the Arabs' was raised. Anyone who got up to support Arab nationalism or to indulge in the excessive glorification of the Arab race was, at once, taken under its patronage by the revolutionary junta even if he had crossed the bounds of Islam and stepped into the sphere of atheism. Awards were given to him, titles were conferred upon him, and he was extolled in every other way. Writers and journalists were given a free licence to write whatever they liked in this context. Newspapers were encouraged to defile religion and make fun of its postulates. With a vengeance they took to the glamourisation of sex, licentiousness and immorality. The nationalisation of the press gave an added fillip to it and nude pictures and pornographic stories began to be lavishly served to the readers. The object was to bring about a drastic change in the moral and intellectual attitudes of the people so that they could be pushed comfortably into the arms of materialism.

For this great, all-embracing social transformation other far-reaching measures were also taken, as for example, the framework of Azhar was altered, the religious law courts, the institution of Qazis and the ecclesiastical waqfs were abolished, and an extraordinary interest was taken in the promotion of co-education, 'mixed' cultural activities, music and dancing.

All-out Drive towards Socialism

Even religious endowments, mosques and the University of

Azhar are being used freely in the all-out drive towards socialism in Egypt. A senior officer of the Ministry of Awqaf (Religious Endowments) has described the establishment of socialism as its sole aim and purpose. He says:

> "The one and only objective before the Ministry of Awqaf is to bring in socialism. Whatever it is doing is directed solely towards strengthening the roots of socialism in our Arab society."
>
> "The main purpose of the mosques and their foremost duty now is to produce good and virtuous men who can take part in the advancement of the modern revolutionary movement."
>
> "The works of charity, social service and welfare that were carried out through the Waqfs, the Ministry has changed them altogether and given them the shape of more useful projects. It has sanctioned a large sum of money for programmes embodying the spirit of socialism."[1]

The extent to which the *Imams*[2] of the mosques, the scholars of Azhar and religious preachers and other officials are being exploited in the cause of socialism is manifest from the following report appearing in the official newspaper *Al-Gamhouria* of July 15, 1966:

> "For the *Ulema* and the *Imams* of the mosques it has been decided that they should hold weekly meetings in the office of the Socialist Union set apart for religious affairs. Dilating upon the significance of the decision, the officer in-charge and the Director of Religious Affairs, Dr. Mohammad Wasfi, said that these meetings formed the nucleus of a revolutionary scheme drawn up by Kamaluddin Rafᶜat, Minister for Awkaf, for enabling the *Ulema* and the *Imams* to discharge their religious duties properly."
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> "The same Dr. Wasfi had declared a couple of weeks

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1. Reproduced from the Religious Supplement of *Al-Gamhouria*, dated July 15. 1966

2. Leaders of Congregational prayers

earlier that "we have evolved a comprehensive plan for inducing the *Ulema* of Azhar to participate more fully and in a practical manner in the battle for progress." He said, "The programme before us is to bring about a close collaboration between religious leaders, preachers and scholars and the Socialist Union so that they became wholly identified with the revolutionary movement of the people and the social changes that are taking place.........This line of approach is the result of a well thought out scheme formulated by Kamaluddin Raf'at, in co-operation with the *Ulema* of Azhar."

"Dr. Wasfi has no hesitation in equating the National Manifesto with the Holy Quran. He goes on to say, "Kamaluddin Raf'at has held a series of meetings with the spiritual mentors, the *Ulema* of Azhar and other representatives of the various groups associated with it. A clear and living picture of the fruits of these endeavours will come up before you when you will see every man and woman carrying in one hand the Book of God and in the other the National Manifesto."

The Religious Supplement of *Al-Gamhouria*, dated August 5, 1966 carried the report that :

"For the months of August and September a new arrangement has been made for religious and cultural programmes over the radio the object of which will be to explain the Islamic origins of Arab socialism. The *Ulema* of Azhar have, further, been required to join the college for higher studies in socialism where they can learn the new techniques for the propagation of socialism and communism in the name of religion."

Similarly, it was published in another issue of the newspaper[1] that the *Imams* should deliver only such sermons at the Friday prayers which have been prepared by themselves and deal with subjects specified by the Ministry of Awqaf.

1. Dated 17-6-1966

The *Mimber-ul-Islam*, a religious monthly, produced under the patronage of Egyptian Government, has come out with an article by Dr. Ahmad Kamal on the message and purpose of the mosques. It reveals that every mosque in Egypt has been placed under the management of a council which is controlled by the local branch of the Socialist Union.

In *Al-Gamhouria*, again, writing under the caption, 'Mohammad bin Abdullah was the Leader of the Socialists', Mohammad Ata observes that "the message of Mohammad (peace be upon him) bears the stamp of his early life which was influenced by an unhealthy class struggle."[1] And, also, that "he (the sacred Prophet) prohibited usury for it was a sign of capitalism and of the system of hoarding." After speaking of the Holy Prophet and the socialist leaders like Thomas Moore in terms of equality, Mohammad Ata concludes his article with the remark that "but in the current century, no one could achieve greater prominence in this field than Gamal Abdel Nasser."

Effects on the Arab World

Ambitious and forward-looking Arabs everywhere, who had set their hearts on the unification and resurgence of the Arab World, spontaneously rallied round the champions of Arab nationalism. They became their passionate admirers imagining their movement to be the forerunner of Arab renaissance which could give them back their former glory and world-leadership. There was nothing wrong or curious about it. It is natural to want to be strong, active and free. The Arab youth, definitely, is entitled to entertain these urges and crave for the unity of the Arab World. The tragedy, however, is that certain events, values and aspirations have got mixed up with this school of thought which are inimical to the spirit of Islam and its teachings and isolate the Arab people from the universal Islamic brotherhood and divert their spiritual allegiance towards

1. Dated 1-7-1966

Arab nationalism which is held more sacrosanct than Islam itself. Consequently, indifference to religion is spreading fast among the younger generations of the Arabs, specially in the bigger cities of West Asia, and the more enthusiastic supporters of Arab nationalism have begun to entertain ideas that are dangerously akin to apostasy and paganism. They no longer regard the Holy Prophet to be the sole deliverer and fountain-head of the dignity and honour of mankind and greatness and solidarity of the Arabs. They look for avenues of power and progress in the murky and deserted corridors of the ancient past; criticism of the Dark Ages which enveloped Arabia before the dawn of Islam is intolerable to them. It produces in them a sort of Paganish partisanship which induces them to defend the pre-Islamic Arab Civilisation as an ancestral legacy.

There could have been some justification, from the purely material and political point of view, for the exaggerated socialistic fervour and excessive emphasis on Arab nationalism had the leaders of modern Egypt (to be more precise, President Nasser) been as much successful in safeguarding the interests of the Arabs and in serving the cause of Egyptian honour and advancement as Kemal Ataturk was in Turkey at a critical moment of its destiny. This could have, for some people, been an adequate compensation for the tremendous sacrifices Egypt had to make under the present regime. It had to bear, for instance, the loss of some of its worthiest sons who could be very useful in the religious, political and cultural fields, and allow itself to be deprived of the Islamic spirit and supra-national feeling of Islamic brotherhood which had been associated with it since the days of old. It was pushed into severe economic difficulties; it was robbed of the freedom of expression which is a great blessing for any country and had been Egypt's distinctive feature, particularly; its ties with the Muslim World and the neighbouring Arab countries suffered a setback and with its religious prestige in the World of Islam, its position of leadership in the Arab World, also, was grievously damaged.

The new leadership of Egypt was quick to capitalise on its

spectacular success in the Suez episode of 1956. Through the press and the radio and by dint of the natural flair for rhetoric in which few Eastern peoples can compare with the Egyptians, the image of the new Egypt as the saviour of the Arabs was carefully projected in West Asia and the impression was given that it could not only provide a fitting answer to the challenge of the tiny State of Israel, but also hold its own against the mighty nations of the West, so much so that when, in May 1967, the blockade of the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba was declared by President Nasser the world began to look for a repetition of the story of the Suez War. But it brought nothing except defeat, humiliation and ruin. Within a few hours of the Israeli attack on June 5, news of the retreat of the Arab forces began to pour in, the Egyptian air power was smashed to pieces in less than three hours,and,on the fifth day,the U. A. R, which was at the head of the United Arab Command, had agreed to unconditional ceasefire. The Israeli troops were not only in occupation of Gaza and Sharm-el Sheikh but the entire peninsula of Sinai had also been over-run by them and they had pitched their tents along the eastern bank of the Suez. Then the realisation dawned with its full force on the fair-minded observers that Egypt had done no good to itself by persistently disregarding the spiritual and ethical Islamic values and pursuing, in their place, an utterly materialistic ideal. The myths of Arab nationalism and Arab socialism had been exploded in the twinkling of an eye like empty balloons. The state of colossal shame and dismay which has now overtaken the Arab World and the spiritual agony and feeling of helplessness the Muslims everywhere are experiencing over the loss of the Holy City of Jerusalem are such that it is hard to find a situation similar to it in the annals of Islam since the Tartar invasion and the sacking of Baghdad. The recent West Asian tragedy has, once again, established it as an irrefutable truth that the destiny of the Arabs is linked with Islam and no movement or endeavour in them can bear fruit or lead to happy and positive results which is based wholly on the crude and vulgar materialism of

the West and on the denial and rejection of Islamic ideals and programme of life. It has also gone a long way to underscore the wisdom and reality of Ibn-e-Khuldun's observation that it is only the religious bond—and no other bond or relationship—which can bring about unity among the Arabs and give them strength.

Intellectual Apostasy

The prevalent trend may be a prelude to an enormous upsurge of cultural, intellectual and spiritual apostasy in the Arab World which even the most powerful manifestations of Arab unity or nationalism or material and political advancement will not be able to check or hold in restraint. Nothing can be more calamitous for the Arabs than this. It can only lead to their total ruin and humiliation and make them a living testimony to the Divine words:

> "Shall We inform you who will be the greatest losers by their deeds? Those whose effort goeth astray in the life of the world, and yet they reckon that they do good work. Those are they who disbelieve in the revelations of their Lord and in the meeting with Him. Therefore, their deeds are in vain, and on the Day of Resurrection We assign no weight to them." (Kahf: 104-106)

Campaign of Doubt and Disbelief—and its Effects

The Egyptian writers and scholars, including the Christians, have been carrying for a long time an intensive campaign of doubt and disbelief against the accepted tenets of Islam and its social and cultural ideals and practices. The basic impulsions of their endeavour may differ but the net result of it is the same. The faith of the Muslims in Islam is being weakened as a result of the relentless onslaught and they are falling a prey to intellectual and moral confusion and waywardness. The Christian writers being more skilful are bringing to bear greater finesse and dexterity in the pursuit of their objective. To cap it all, huge publishing houses (controlled mainly by the Christians) are

operating in Egypt for the production of this kind of literature and no time is lost in despatching the works of these writers to the four corners of the Arab World. A flood of new books is, literally, issuing forth from that country and since these books are, generally, written in the modern style and got up exquisitely they hold a powerful appeal for the younger generations. Modern educated and unsuspecting Arab youth is assimilating the ideas sought to be circulated by the misguided or positively evil-intentioned writers with unconcealed eagerness. In the upshot, intellectual anarchy of a severe nature is sweeping over Egypt and spreading to the other Arab countries and the solid foundations on which rested the mighty Islamic society have begun to totter. Islamic high-mindedness and self-respect and the pride of history is yielding place among the Arabs to cowardice, greed, indolence and fear of the West. Their inner vitality, which is the sheet-anchor of all people in the hour of need, is being steadily sapped. It is beyond doubt that skepticism and mental unrest which have taken a significant hand in the decline and fall of the earlier civilisations have crept into the life of the Arab, thanks to the malevolence of the Egyptian intellectuals, writers[1] and professors we have just referred to, and the gruesome tragedy that overtook the Arab World on June 5, 1967 in the shape of the thundering triumph of Israel was fundamentally due to these reasons.

On the other hand, the movement of *Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen* had worked for the Islamic re-orientation of the Arabs and revived in them the old Islamic values of courage, reliance on God and self-sacrifice to such an extent that they had put up a heroic resistance during the invasion of Palestine in 1948. But the organisation was legally banned in Egypt with the result that in the recent war it did not have an opportunity to play its part and the Arabs were brought to their knees by Israel within a space of six days. The alternative philosophies of Arab

1. Such as, Rifa'ah bek Tahtawi, Qusim Amin and Ahmad Lutfi Es-Saiyyid, Dr. Taha Husain and Mohammad Husnain Haikal.

nationalism and socialism were manifestly incapable of filling the void created by the suppression of the *Ikhwan* movement. These could neither unite the Arabs nor arouse in them the earnestness of purpose and enthusiasm which alone could save the day for the Arab countries. In consequence, not only the Arabs but the entire Muslim Millet is crest-fallen today and presenting a spectacle of grief and humiliation.

Syria and Iraq

Since their emancipation both Syria and Iraq have been rocked by a number of bloody upheavals. These rich, fertile and overwhelmingly Muslim Arab countries[1], which have been in the past the seats of Islamic Caliphate, one after the other, have now passed unashamedly under the moral, cultural and intellectual shadow of the West. Their ruling sections and modern educated classes are exhibiting a pronounced inclination towards the ideals of Arab nationalism, secularism and socialism. The masses are true, simple Muslims with a genuine regard for Islam; many old traditions are still in vogue among them, and in both of these countries religious scholars and divines of such a high stature are found that their equals will not easily be seen elsewhere in the Muslim World. Yet the hold of religion over society is weakening day by day, the influence of the spiritual mentors and theological scholars is declining and women are becoming more and more clamorous for freedom and abolition of the *purdah*; the so-called cultural activities with unconcealed opportunities of sensual entertainment and intermixing of the sexes are gaining fast in popularity, co-education has been introduced and the attributes of irreligiousness, or, rather, anti-religiousness are acquiring the upper hand in the daily life of the people. In support of our thesis, here is an extract from the political manifesto of the Ba'athist Party which controlled the Government and politics of Iraq for a long time and is now in

1. Muslims form 90% of the total population of Syria and 93% of the total population of Iraq.

power in Syria.

> "The Arab nation, endowed with an eternal message, considers that part of the world its national homeland which is populated by the Arab and bordered by the mountains of Taurus and Bashtkoya, the Bay of Basra, the Arabian Sea, the Abyssinian mountains, the Great Sahara, the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranian Sea."

Some other passages of the manifesto read:

(i) The Arab nation is a cultural unity: the various distinctions among its children are superficial and unreal which are sure to disappear with the dawn of Arab consciousness.

(ii) The Arab nation is in possession of an imperishable message. It manifests itself in various forms at various stages of its history, gaining in vigour and maturity with every change, encouraging the reformation of human values and promoting the progress of mankind and international amity and co-operation.

(iii) The Ba'ath is a Nationalist Party. It believes in nationalism as a living and indestructible reality, and holds that awakened national consciousness which unites the individual with the community is a sacred sentiment, full of creative vitality and capable of arousing people to heroic deeds of self-sacrifice and serving as a practical and valuable guide to the individual and the community.

(iv) The Ba'ath is a socialist party which believes that socialism is a necessity springing from the womb of Arab nationalism. It is the most suitable instrument for the fulfilment of the destiny of the Arab nation.

(v) The national tie is the sole existing bond in the Arab State which can produce unity and integration among its people and mould them into a single nation. It is intolerant of all religious, social, tribal and local prejudices.

(vi) A uniform code of law which is in keeping with the

spirit of the modern age shall be drawn up for the entire state in the light of the past experiences of the Arab nation.[1]

The founder of the Ba'ath Party, a Christian scholar, named Michael Aflak, has enunciated his point of view in these words:

"In the nature of things, it is quite possible for anyone, however limited his capabilities, to become a vague and humble replica of Mohammad as long as he belongs to the nation that pooled up all of its resources and gave unsparingly of its genius to produce Mohammad, or, to put it more appropriately, to the nation which Mohammad brought into being and to which he gave all he had, his talents and his energies. The life of the whole nation had, once, got embodied in one man, and now that it is marching on a new road to progress, it is imperative for it to make its life a commentary and elucidation of that magnificent personality. Mohammad was all Arabs. Today, all Arabs must become Mohammad."[2]

"The triumph of Islam over the world was delayed so that the Arabs might attain reality through their own struggle and their own trials and experiences, and after passing through all kinds of ordeals and hardships, successes and failures, hopes and disappointments; or, in other words, so that faith might grow in them from within, out of personal experience, a real faith having its roots in the inner depths of life. Thus, Islam was an Arab movement, with the resurgence of Arabism and its fulfilment as its fundamental meaning and objective."

"Islam represents the most excellent expression and interpretation of the eternity and extensiveness of the Arab race. Hence, in its essence, it is Arabian, and, in its idealistic purpose, it is universal. The message of Islam, therefore, is that of universal Arab morality."

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1. *El-Ahzab-us-Siyasiyato Fi Suriya (The Political Parties—Syria)*
2. *Fi Sabeel-il-Ba'ath*, p. 45

"The truth Islam is unfolding at this historic hour, and during this crucial phase of progress and change, is that every ounce of energy should be pressed into service for the strengthening and advancement of the Arabs and that all the endeavours and energies must be confined to the four corners of Arab nationalism."

"In Europe the concept of pure nationalism is based wholly on logic, and the separation of religion from nationalism has become a settled fact. For religion has come there from outside, it is a stranger to its history and temperament, and consists only of the bare outlines of morality and faith in the Hereafter. It does not conform to the needs of European environment, nor is it related to European tradition. Islam, for Arabs, on the other hand, is much more than a mere combination of morality and faith in the Hereafter. It is a forceful interpretation of their way of life and their universal consciousness and of the organic oneness of their personality, in which words are completely in tune with thought and feeling."[1]

Unfortunately, this mode of thought and philosophy of life became the ruling passion among the younger intelligentsia, particularly the young Army Officers and University graduates. For the past few years the protagonists of this ideology have been in power in Syria with the consequence that socialistic trends and concepts of Arab nationalism and secular politics are being thrust upon the people with a merciless hand. It has become almost impossible for people espousing the cause of Islam or holding views different from those of the ruling classes to live in their country and propagate their ideas. Many of them have migrated to Europe or to some other Arab country and Syria which was once considered to be the second greatest centre of Islamic learning (next only to Egypt) has, thus, been deprived of the services of some of its most illustrious theological leaders and men of letters. Its leadership has passed into immature

1. *Fi-Sabeel-il-Ba'ath* pp., 45-49

hands. Frequent upheavals and violent changes in the structure of the government have ruined its economy. Because of uncertain political conditions, there has been taking place a steady flight of capital to foreign lands. The purely materialistic ideas and urges and the Western cults of nationalism and socialism have gone straight to the head, so much so that the younger writers and responsible civil and military officers do not hesitate to ridicule and deride openly even the accepted religious concepts and spiritual and moral values common to the revealed faiths. We are here going to reproduce, in support of our thesis, some of the extracts from an article published in the official journal of the Armed Forces of Syria, called, *Jaish-el-Shoob*. The article has been written by an important Army Offlcer, Ibrahim Khallas. The extracts read as follows:

> "We called to the Worshipped One for help, took stock of the ancient values of Islam and Christianity, sought guidance from the feudal and the capitalist systems and tried and experimented with some of the most famous social and political orders of the medieval times. But none of these could do the least amount of good to us. The Arab nation then girded up its loins; it took courage in both hands and cast its glance higher. It tried to see its new-born child which was slowly moving closer to it. This new-born child is the modern Arab socialist."
>
> "All the perverted, diseased and sickly values found in the society are the products of feudalism, capitalism and imperialism. These values have made the Arab lazy, slothful, spiritless and fatalistic and left him capable of little else except saying: *La Haul wa la Quoowat-i-Illa Billahil Azim.* (There is no fear or power but of God, the All-powerful).
>
> "The new values that will give birth to a new Arab have sprung up from this oppressed, exploited and rebellious man himself. These have grown out of the existence of a hungry, revolutionary socialist who believes in man and man alone.

> "The only way to reconstruct the Arab Civilisation and to create an Arab society lies in giving rise to a new Arab socialist who may hold firmly, as a matter of faith and conviction, that God, religion, feudalism, capitalism and imperialism, in brief, all the values that reigned supreme in the social structure of the olden days are things of the past and now the museum is the only appropriate place for them.
>
> "When we demand of our new man to reject all the ancient values it becomes our duty to give him some new, precise and well-defined values which centre around an absolute faith in a new, deterministic man, a man who believes only in himself, in his action and in what he gives to mankind for he knows that death is his end, nothing but death, after which there will be neither heaven nor hell but complete nothingness—he will get reduced to an atom and begin to rotate with the earth. Hence, he is compelled, by the very nature of his existence, to offer to his people, and to humanity, whatever he can and without any consideration of reward or recompense (like a little resting place in Heaven)."

When this enthusiasm for socialism and Arab nationalism was at its height war with Israel broke out and Syria had to meet on the battlefield an enemy it had been challenging all these years and for the purpose of opposing which it had been strenuously whipping up nationalist fervour among the Arabs. Syria not only failed to defend its frontiers against the onslaught of the Israeli forces, but it also had to yield a large chunk of its territory and now it is presenting to the world a picture of frustration and defeat and looking up helplessly to its socialist patrons and the champions of Arab nationalism for succour and assistance. It is difficult to see how it is going to extricate itself from the mess it has landed in.

Iran

Following closely the example of Turkey, Iran, too, tried to alter its cultural and intellectual structure by adopting a series

of far-reaching 'reforms'. The process was set into motion by Emperor Reza Shah Pehlavi (1925-41) through a number of cleverly conceived measures the consequences of which could only be far-reaching for the Iranian society. Commenting on the changes introduced by him, George Lenczowski writes:

> "Reza's plans for reform were not restricted to technological advances only. He wanted to modernise the country in the social and educational fields as well. In 1927 he introduced the French Judicial System, thus challenging the competence of the religious courts in civil matters. A year later he formally abolished capitulations. Another law in 1931 forbade foreigners to own agricultural land. The trend towards secularisation was clearly discernible, but never did it assume proportions similar to Turkey. Reza Shah wanted no sharing of authority with any independent group in Iran, and he considered the influence of the backward Shia clergy as detrimental to the westernisation of the country. But he proceeded cautiously. The failure of pro-republican agitation and the defeat of his reforming neighbour, Amanullah Khan of Afghanistan, at the hands of mullahs in 1929 had taught him that what was possible in a half-Europeanised Turkey was not yet possible in Iran. Furthermore, the Iranian constitution expressly stated that 'the official religion of Iran is Islam and the true sect is the Jafariya. The Shah of Iran must profess and propagate this faith.' It also forbade the Majlis to pass legislation contrary to the principles of Islam and provided for consultation of the theologians in the legislative process; furthermore, such consultation was to be binding. The Shah did not feel that he could openly challenge these provisions. As a result, instead of launching a frontal attack, he used various devious ways, evading and ignoring the Shia hierarchy rather than curbing them directly.
>
> "In fact, everything that pertained to the establishment of a modern education system or the emancipation of

women was bonnd to reduce the influence of the clergy. And in these fields a good deal was done in the inter-war period. Officially, compulsory primary education was decreed ; and though it never worked perfectly in practice, because of the shortage of teachers and funds, impressive advances were made in spreading the network of schools. Since the beginning of the century Iran had possessed some institutions of higher learning but in 1931 a University of six faculties was established in Teheran and provided with spacious modern buildings. It had also a theological faculty, but since 1930 compulsory religious education had been eliminated from the primary and secondary schools. The school curricula stressed patriotism and civic mindedness. As a reaction to external influence, a law of 1932 forbade foreign primary schools in the country. It eventually affected all schools sponsored by foreign missionaries and Teheran College, an American Presbyterian secondary school, had to close its doors. Sports were encouraged and a number of modern stadia were erected in the principal towns. The Government made participation in Boy Scout and Girl Guide organisations compulsory for teen-agers merely to imbue the young generation with the spirit of nationalism. These activities obviously kept the youth of the country away from religious pursuits and contemplation. Quite a blow, though indirectly, was delivered to religious influence by the prohibition of oriental dress in 1928. The fez and the turban were replaced first by the so called Pehlavi hat (a kind of French Kepi, which was compulsory for all males), and later by a regular European hat.

"The Shah also promoted various measures to emancipate women. Under his influence the Majlis passed legislation curbing the exaggerated divorce privileges hitherto possessed by husbands and made women eligible for public offices, though not to representative public functions. Through instructions given to army officers and government officials, the Shah encouraged the adoption of Western dress

for women, and in 1935 his wife and daughters made a public appearance in Western costumes. From that time veils were forbidden. This reform caused some riots, but enforcement was strict and all had to comply with the law.

"The Shah also ordered the revision of the language, with a view to purify it from Arabic influence. This became one of the specific tasks of the Iranian Academy of Literature, founded in 1935. In contrast to Turkey, however, no reform of the alphabet was attempted despite the fact that the Arabic script does not meet the requirements of the Persian language. In March, 1935 the State was officially named Iran to replace the Hellenistic name of Persia."[1]

The present ruler of Iran, feeling that the time had come for bringing in more reforms, has given constitutional status to a number of far-reaching changes in the existing socio-economic order, such as, women's franchise and the abolition of the archaic system of landlordism. The ecclesiastical leaders of the country reacted sharply against these measures and there were widespread demonstrations and also a few riots but the decision of the Government remained unchanged.

However, the interest Iran has lately shown in Islamic unity, motivated it may be by political compulsions, is a good augury. In the past it had been a vast centre of Islamic religious and literary activity. On the strength of the countless poets, litterateurs, philosophers and sufi-saints it has produced it can justly be described as the Greece of the Muslim East. In spite of some exaggerated religious beliefs and practices which are a natural outcome of its past history, a number of movements for Islamic revival and unity are to be found there and healthful and inspiring literature on Islam is gaining in popularity day by day.

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1. George Lenczowski : The Middle East in World Affairs, pp., 180-82

Indonesia

Indonesia, with a Muslim population of about ninety per cent, offers no exception to the general drift of the newly emancipated Islamic countries towards secularism and Westernisation, and towards the conviction that the Islamic law, having outlived its usefulness, was not capable any more of delivering the goods in the present-day world. In spite of the bitter and bloody tussle, spread over several years, in the shape of the Dar-us-Salam momement, its ruling classes have been moving fast on the road indicated by Turkey, under the inspiration of President Soekarno. We can obtain a glimpse of contemporary Indonesia and of the intellectual motivations of its rulers from the following extract from Louis Fischer :

> "The only non-communist Moslem country which has undergone a deep cultural revolution is Turkey, where Kemal Pasha Ataturk abolished the state religion, the Islamic courts, the Caliphate, the veil and the harem, and the use of Arabic script, and decreed European dress, a Latin alphabet, public education, votes for women, Sunday Sabbath and nationalism. None of these reforms is necessary in Indonesia. To that extent Indonesia has already had its Western revolution. The republic is secular. Though the 1945 and 1950 Constitutions declare that the state is based on belief in God, no government official from the President down is required to be a Moslem or to take an oath of office in the name of God or Mohammad. Freedom 'to profess his own religion' is guaranteed by both Constitutions to every citizen.
>
> "The non-Islamic, non-theocratic nature of the Indonesian State has antagonised a significant segment of the population and provoked the Republic's longest, and most expensive guerilla war. The usual justification of secularism is the existence of a considerable body of Christians, Hindus and others. But the big, unspoken reason is the difficulty of conducting a modern government according to the precepts of the Koran, which was ostensibly

dictated to the Prophet by the angel Gabriel before A. D. 632. Moreover, if the Quran were the Law, the lawyers would be the obscurantist Muslim divines and politics would bear the stamp of their centuries-old ideas. Most of Indonesia's parties, leaders, intellectuals, however, are enlightened, modern minded partisans of a secular state, and secularism, for the Moslem state is Western."[1]

With the emphatic inclination towards secularism and Westernisation, Indonesia was making a steady progress towards Communism under the leadership of President Soekarno when the Communist elements in the army and the civil services made an abortive attempt to seize power through an armed insurrection. This was followed by a sharp reaction among the Muslim masses, particularly the students, culminating in the forced ejection of the Communists, along with their sympathisers and fellow-travellers, from the armed forces as well as civil administration and the virtual deposition of President Soekarno. The positive aspect of the change in leadership—if it has any—is not yet clear and it cannot be said whether Indonesia will see the need of revising its attitude towards the challenge of the Western social, cultural and intellectual concepts and there will be some swing in favour of the Islamic point of view.

Other Emerging Muslim Countries

The other Muslim countries lucky enough to emerge into freedom during recent years also present, more or less, an identical picture. The leadership everywhere seems to be determined to adopt the intellectual concepts of the West along with all their political, economic and cultural attributes. Their ruling classes appear to be ceaselessly at war with the spirit of Islam and its social, mental and cultural structure which could be of enormous advantage to the people. A reckless attack has been launched in all these countries against the transcendental and spiritual forces that have become a part of the very existence

1. Louis Fischer : The Story of Indonesia (1959), pp., 260-61

of the Muslim *millat*, thanks to the incessant exertions and sacrifices made by its religious guides and mentors. Through their declarations and behaviour and the educational systems introduced by them, the rulers of these Islamic countries are sedulously undermining the religious feeling and spiritual stamina of their people which is absolutely unique. It can neither be manufactured in a workshop nor generated by fiery orations but is produced solely by the grace of the sacred Prophets and the dedicated and untiring efforts of those who cast their lives in their mould. Should, God forbid, the source of this singular sentiment and vitality run dry in the hearts of men no amount of national consciousness or political awakening or intellectual or cultural advancement can take its place and fill the vacuum thus created. This religious feeling and spiritual force has performed astounding deeds in the past and can do the same again. Its capacity to make the 'impossible' happen is boundless. It was this very enthusiasm, spirit of sacrifice and passion for *Jehad* and martyrdom with which the battle of the Suez and the war of Algerian Independence were won.

It is a cruel irony of politics and a mournful tragedy of history that so long as a Muslim country is engaged in the struggle for freedom and the need there is to arouse the masses to outstanding deeds of valour and sacrifice, the leaders of the freedom movement speak exclusively the language of religion for the reason that there is no surer and more effective way of working up popular enthusiasm. The masses are interested in no other cause than the glorification of Islam, the propitiation of God and the earning of His reward in the Hereafter. Nothing stirs them more powerfully than the slogan of faith. Their leaders, therefore, forego no opportunity to play on their religious sentiments and by holding out to them the promise of an Islamic revival and the establishment of an Islamic state, they urge them on to plunge into the sea of fire and blood. For, at least, so far as Muslims are concerned, no strength that they can muster is comparable to the strength of faith. But, once the battle of freedom is won and the foreign yoke is cast away, the leaders

quickly forget the Islamic ideals they used to swear by and start pushing the country zestfully on the road to secularism and westernisation. The programme of religious and social reform and of the revision of Muslim Personal Law and the introduction of Western cultural and political values and institutions is rushed through with such clumsy haste that the masses are, sometimes, inclined to wonder whether it had not been a big mistake, after all, to have staked everything for the sake of their country's deliverance from foreign rule. From the Turkey of 1924 to the Algeria of 1962 the course of events has been almost exactly the same. There is no exception to the rule. The Arab countries, too, are engaged in emulating the example of Turkey against whose paramountcy they had once revolted and with the foreign policies of which they are so much in disagreement even today.

It has, however, now become crystal clear that when a Muslim country is locked in a life and death struggle with an enemy several times stronger, its only hope of survival lies in Islamic unity and in the spirit of Jehad and love for martyrdom which only a living Islamic consciousness can produce. The importance of the unity of the Muslim World, upon which stress was laid by leaders like Syed Ahmad Shaheed, Jamaluddin Afghani and Mohammad Iqbal during their lifetime, is being realised more and more in contemporary times. From Morocco to Malaysia arrangements for closer co-operation and assistance are being forged among the Islamic countries and a feeling of oneness is growing. The rulers of the Muslim countries are no longer intolerant of the Islamic spirit and religious consciousness of their peoples; they do not frown upon it now. Instead, they have begun to lean upon it and to appreciate its value and importance for they have realised in their hearts that Allah is their last refuge and at the time of national peril they can find shelter nowhere except in His name. The absurdity of the undiscerning imitation of the West is also becoming clear to them day by day and the voice of faith and the language of religion has begun to be understood in the Islamic countries.

A grave responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the preachers of Islam and the champions of Islamic regeneration at this critical juncture of history. They have no time to lose. If they act with courage and wisdom the face of the Muslim World can be turned during these favourable times from thoughtless Westernisation and a new era of Islamic revival and renaissance can be ushered in, the watchword of which should be,'Back to Islam'.

Tunisia

Among such newly emancipated Arab countries the name of Tunisia comes first which attained freedom in 1956. Its first President, M. Habib Bourguiba, lost no time in putting its feet on the path of Kemalist reformism. From his speeches and declarations it is clear that he wants to take his country, step by step, towards the Turkish ideal. He is particularly enamoured by the French culture and would like it to be the culture of modern Tunisia. Though the influential *Le Monde* of Paris is not willing to believe that Tunisia is heading towards irreligiousness the following extract from it is significant:

> "President Bourguiba has placed a number of restrictions on the institution of polygamy.[1] In the same way, the privileges enjoyed by husbands, particularly in the matter of divorce, have also been greatly curtailed.[2] This freedom in the family sphere when aided by social and political freedom becomes a double blessing. Women now enjoy the right to vote and can also get elected to the legislative bodies. Public services have been thrown open to them. About a hundred women are today employed as teachers, one thousand and five hundred in the offices and seven thousand in other branches of public employment.
>
> "Tunisia is playing the role of a pioneer in this sector

1. This was in 1958. Since then polygamy has been totally abolished.
2. Husbands have, subsequently, been wholly deprived of the right to divorce their wives on their own. It can now be done only through a Court of Law.

of progress. Turkey had opened up this avenue under the guidance of Kemal Ataturk and now Tunisia is carrying it ahead. The country is changing distinctly and fast. *Purdah* is disappearing, specially, in the younger generation. The number of women coming out into the open is increasing day by day. At political meetings they are seen side by side with men. In the rural areas, of course, (where the opposition is still strong) the pace is slow.

"President Bourguiba has desisted from using compulsion to bring about the change. He would prefer worn-out garments to fall away themselves. He stoutly denies the allegation of being an atheist or that he is going to discard Islam. At the same time, he is striving for a synthesis between religious traditions and the unavoidable culture of the West. He often takes pains to explain that while his reform may not conform literally to the injunctions of the Quran, they are not inimical to its spirit. As such, it will be correct to say that modern Tunisia is inclined more towards the Egyptian than the Kemalist school of thought. Just as the University of Azhar has been preserved in Egypt, Bourguiba has been cautious in his opposition to the University of Zaituna in Tunis. But during these two years, he has been gradually limiting its scope and influence and is now seriously considering its affiliation with the University of Tunis as an exclusively theological institution."[1]

A more elaborate analysis of 'progressivism' in modern Tunisia has been attempted by Josef Schacht who writes:

"………by legislation enacted in 1956, Tunisia has put herself in the forefront of the countries which apply Islamic

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1. *Le Monde*, January 29, 1958

As for the University of Zaituna which, according to Tunisian scholars is older than the University of Azhar and the most ancient seat of learning in the Islamic World, its status as a university has been ended and, now, it is only a Shariat College, affiliated with the University of Tunis.

legal modernism. First of all, the so-called public waqfs were abolished and their assets became the property of the state, a measure of even more far-reaching legal importance than the abolition of the so-called private waqfs in Syria and Egypt; secondly, following the Egyptian act of the year before, a new Tunisian code of personal status was enacted. Although the Tunisian Ministry of Justice claimed in a communique that the code had received the approval of eminent specialists, although the code has retained such typically Islamic institutions, as the 'dower' and foster-parentship which are an impediment to marriage, and although it agrees in many details with the doctrine of one or the other of two schools of Islamic law recognised in Tunisia, it cannot be regarded, even under the most accommodating interpretation, as being merely an adaptation of traditional Islamic law. A number of high religious and judicial authorities in Tunisia issued *fatwa* in which they declared themselves against the code, and four of them, including both the Maliki and Hanafi Grand Muftis, resigned in protest from the Tribunal Superior of which they were members. The section of the code on the law of succession, it is true, reproduces the traditional doctrine almost without change, because it was felt, no doubt, that it still corresponded with the requirements of social conditions in Tunisia, but the law of marriage and divorce has been changed out of all recognition. Polygamy, for instance, has been prohibited and made a criminal offence; marriage is concluded by the consent of bridegroom and bride; and divorce can be pronounced only by a Court of law (*a*) at the request of one of the spouses on the grounds specified in the Code, (*b*) in the case of mutual consent, (*c*) at the request of one of the spouses in which case the judge fixes the indemnity due to one spouse by the other. The wife, therefore, has essentially been made the equal of the husband with regard to monogamy and divorce, as she has, incidentally, been made with regard to the

matrimonial law of property. It is unlikely that the draftsmen of the Tunisian code ever knew of the ideas of Khuda Buksh, but there can be no doubt that the Tunisian code is inspired by ideas similar to his. Whatever the declarations of the Tunisian authorities, their code of personal status differs, objectively speaking, from traditional Islamic law as much as does the 'secular' Civil Code of Turkey."[1]

It appears that the intellectual journey of President Bourguiba (which began with the eager assimilation of the ideas propagated by the protagonists of Western Civilization, Christian missionaries and Orientalists) is still continuing and the time has come when it has become difficult for him to camouflage his views and he has begun to express them without caution or restraint.

Below we are giving a summary of the speech delivered by M. Bourguiba at the International Cultural Seminar held at Tunis in March, 1974, in which some significant, though curious, suggestions were given to Tunisian intellectuals.[2]

(i) The Quran is full of contradictions which the intellect is no longer willing to accept. The President quoted these two verses to illustrate his point:

> Say: Naught befalleth us save that which Allah hath decreed for us (IX: 51); and Lo! Allah changeth not the condition of a folk until they (first) change that which is in their hearts (XIII: 11).[3]

(ii) The holy Prophet was an unsophisticated man who often travelled to countries lying beyond the desert-land of Arabia. He used to listen keenly to parables and other traditional legends

1. J. Schacht: Problems of Modern Islamic Legislation—*Studia Islamica*, Vol. 12 (1960), pp. 124-26.

2. *Es-Sabah* (Tunis), March 21, 1974.

3. The contradiction pointed out by President Bourguiba between the two verses is either due to his ignorance of the Arabic language (for he received all his education in France) or because he never got an opportunity to study the Commentary of the Quran or enquire even from an ordinary scholar of Islamic theology.

that were popular at that time but had no foundation in history and transferred these to the Quran, as for example, the Rod of Moses (which the mind cannot accept after the discovery of Bastour, and Ashab-i-Kahf (the People of the Cave).[1]

(iii) The excessive veneration of the Prophet by the Muslims has gone so far that they have exalted him to the position of God, a proof of which is that they always call him Mohammad, Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon whom and his descendants, i.e., God may send His blessings on to the Prophet which is the equivalent of regarding a man as God.[2]

We do not want to offer any comments on these views here for they are not worthy of it. It is apparent from them what a great victim of inferiority complex and intellectual servility M. Bourguiba is. He has not made a serious study of any branch of learning nor been able to digest properly the objections raised and doubts expressed by the critics. Now, whether a person who holds such views can remain in the fold of Islam or have the right to rule as a Muslim over a country possessing a Muslim majority has best been answered in the form of the reaction evoked by M. Bourguiba's speech in the Islamic theological and religiously inclined circles all over the world.[3]

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1. This allegation also confirms the President's lack of education and the mentality which was quite common to the educated classes during the latter half of the 19th century when science and historical research had not made much progress but has no justification now, in the modern times. It, however, shows that M. Bourguiba regards the Quran to have been written by the Prophet and not a devine revelation.

2. It, again, is indictive of the President's ignorance and anxiety to pass a judgement on anything without caring to enquire into it. What has the sending of salutation and blessings to do with deification ? It is found in all the Divine Scriptures and sacred writings ; in fact, in the whole of religious literature.

3. Incidentally, a meeting of the Advisory Committee of the University of Madina was held a few days after this speech was delivered in which reputed Muslim scholars and educationists of Arab and Islamic countries, from Indonesia to Morocco, had participated. The present writer was also

[*Continued on next page*

Apart from the three points enumerated above, the views expressed by M. Bourguiba on the record of the Prophet's life and Islamic tenets and modes of worship candidly show that he not only does not agree with the fundamental principles and the Shariat of Islam but also wants to lead the Muslims of Tunisia on the same path and to create doubt and suspicion in their hearts. It should not be difficult to conclude from it on what course Tunisia is preparing to set out which gave numerous outstanding theologians and men of learning, like Ibn-i-Khaldun, to the World of Islam. We learn that the task of transforming Tunisia into a Westernised country has been taken in hand with renewed energy and enthusiasm after the disapproval shown by Islamic circles over President Bourguiba's address.

Algeria

No country in modern history has paid a greater price for freedom than Algeria. It is estimated that as many as a million Algerians perished at the hands of the French Imperialists during the war of Independence. The secret of this unexampled heroism lay in the inborn spirit of *Jehad* and love for martyrdom of the Algerian Muslims. The Algerian patriots were spoken of in the Western press simply as Muslims. They were just this and nothing else in the despatches sent out by the international news agencies. But when freedom came Algeria found itself caught in exactly the same difficulties which confronted the other up and coming Islamic countries struggling under West-oriented leadership. Disregardful of popular sentiment and in utter contempt of the expectations of the religious-minded sections of its population, the makers of modern Algeria are engaged in refashioning their country along the usual lines of secularism, materialistic socialism and Western Civilisation. The true nature of this

present as a member of the Committee. A strongly worded protest was sent to M. Bourguiba by the members of the Advisory Committee in which profound concern was expressed at the views expressed by him,and it was hinted that one who held such views could not to be a Muslim. A large number of Muslim journals, also, indignantly commented on it.

woeful state of affairs against which the Islamic character of Algeria and the blood of its martyrs are crying out in protest can be judged from the following report appearing in the *Jewish Observer* of London, dated August 31, 1963:

"The religious leaders of Algeria have declared that Islam and Arabic language will be supreme in their country. In a statement they have severely criticised the national leaders who in keeping with the general trend are in support of modern socialist state in which religion will not be allowed to project itself in the affairs of the State.

"The Ulema stressed that the Algerian War of Independence will be remembered as betrayal of the martyrs who laid down their lives in the cause of national liberation and an utter failure so far as its purpose was concerned if Islam was not recognised as the official religion and Arabic as the official language of the new State.

"The cease-fire agreement of Irian specifically provides that religious freedom will be guaranteed to all citizens equally and both Arabic and French will be the state languages. It was also agreed that the Constitution will be drafted by the representatives of the people who were to meet on September 9, but owing to the differences between the Army officers and political leaders the proposed meeting could not take place.

"Now for the first time since the liquidation of the French rule the Algerian Ulema have stated categorically that freedom and economic progress could not be the sole objectives of the revolution. In their statement they say, 'Every independent nation possesses an individual existence. Were it not so, all the nations would get mixed up with each other, as the fish did in water, and there would be nothing to distinguish among the Algerians and the French and the Spaniards. It would mean the transformation of Algeria into an undisguised international state. We are opposed to it from the first to the last. We are Algerians; we have a distinct, independent, national personality, and

this is the verdict of our Islamic faith, our language, our tradition and our history.

"The Ulema have denounced the move for the separation of Islam from government and politics as a betrayal of the revolution and an assault on Islam in the home of the Muslim *millet* itself and an insult to the entire Algerian people."

The new ruler of Algeria, Houri Boumedienne, is conspicuous among the Arab leaders for his communist leanings and pro-Soviet policies. When the Soviet Union struck a highly unexpected and disappointing attitude in the Israeli-Arab war and the realisation of their disgrace and helplessness dawned upon the Arabs, the Arab countries which were increasingly accepting the Russian influence were naturally disillusioned and their faith in the sincerity of the professions of friendship made by the Soviet leaders suffered a powerful setback. At that time the Algerian President took upon himself the responsibility of rehabilitating the prestige of the Soviet Union in the Arab World and of mending the relations of the hitherto well-known pro-Soviet Arab countries like Iraq, Syria and the U. A. R with it.

The national leaders of the rising Arab countries, with all their 'progressivism', take care to make a display, now and then, of their attachment to Islam for they know that it still is the most infallible way of reaching the hearts of the people. But their concept of Islam is different. It means, according to them, the 'reformed' faith which can be made to align itself freely with the ideals of Western Civilisation and with their own ideology of nationalism—an Islam which will confine itself rigidly to religious beliefs and morality and take care not to obtrude into the affairs of the state. The views expressed by Salem in his essay on 'Nationalism and Islam', are very significant in this connection. He writes:

"In working for this goal nationalism makes a close alliance with Islam. But the Islam with which nationalism associates is not the rigid Islam of the past, but a radically interpreted Islam—an idealised Islam that is conceived in

the spirit of modernity. Muhammad and the Quran are invoked to justify the incorporation of every institution that the nationalists adopt. In rallying to the Islamic standard Arab nationalism has found great support in the masses. In a sense one may say that Arab nationalism is exploiting Islam to reconstruct an Arab nation. In depicting Arabism and Islamism as interdependent the nationalists are scoring a great victory."[1]

Rubble

The plant of Western thought and civilisation which had flourished so well in its natural climate and environment was duly brought in and set on the soil of the East. The surrounding conditions were diligently altered to suit it, the ground was carefully prepared and the plant was fixed with utmost attention. The hands that had planted it then took upon themselves to remove what was described as the social and intellectual rubble. But the time and energy spent on the destructive endeavour could be of real benefit to the country and the nation had it been employed more imaginatively for arousing the latent potentialities of Muslims through a religious and ethical reorientation.

Reactionary Role of the 'Progressives'

Not unoften, the modernists, in their over-enthusiasm, espouse ideas and institutions that have lost their utility and importance in the West and are now regarded only as a hang-over of the past. The West had adopted them in the course of its collective experiments for a limited period of time and when the weaknesses and the dangers inherent in them were revealed, it began to discard them in favour of a broader and more enlightened outlook.

The philosophy of nationalism furnishes a typical example of the reactionary predisposition of the so-called forward-looking leaders and intellectuals of the East. The West has grown sick

1. *The Muslim World* (October, 1962), p. 277

of it ; yet the leadership in most of the Oriental Islamic countries is still enamoured by the out-dated notion as if it was the culminating point of all social and political thought and activity. Nationalism, basically, is nothing more than an improved form of primitive tribalism. It is crude, narrow and selfish. It is like an old and tattered dress which the West has cast away. The Western people now regard it to be a subversive and cataclysmic force which has broken up humanity into isolated fragments and destroyed its organic unity by setting up artificial walls within it.

The world, on the whole, has attained sufficient intellectual and emotional maturity to view nationalism with distrust and repugnance. Thoughtful and farsighted men everywhere are rejecting it progressively as an out-moded concept. According to them,it constitutes a grave threat to international peace and co-operation, while what mankind really requires in the present atomic age is a world community and universal brotherhood. To press home our point we will refer to what has been said about it by two of the most eminent scholars of our time, one from the West and the other from the East. The noted Western historian and social philosopher, Arnold Toynbee, writes:

> "The future lies with whatever religion or religions can create the spiritual brotherhood that is mankind's need today. Communism claims to be a sovereign unifier; Islam has been proving itself to be a unifier in Africa; Christianity could play the same role if it could bring itself to live up to its principles. Nationalism, however, stands for division, not for unity, so nationalism really has no future. It may destroy mankind and bury itself in the ruins, but it can do no more than that.
>
> "In the atomic age we have to choose between two extremes. If we are not to destroy ourselves we have to learn to live as a single united human family embracing all mankind without exception."[1]

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1. Islamic Review : March 1961

And the Indian philosopher, Dr. Radhakrishnan, speaking at a function organised in his honour by the World Affairs Council at Los Angeles on the 10th of June, 1963, called for a world society and a world community to be established "that will value humanity above all nations."

He said:

> "Nationalism is not the highest concept.........Political domination, social discrimination, economic exploitation, in past history, had led to wars. We are victims of outmoded concepts while living in a new world. If we tried our best to get rid of these concepts we would aid peace."

Intellectual Immaturity

The insistence of the leaders of the Eastern countries on repeating the experiments made unsuccessfully in the West betrays the immaturity of their minds. With all their education, culture and the positions of high responsibility these leaders hold, they seem to be incapable of doing their own thinking. Originality of thought is not a strong point with them. They lack creativeness and the ability to act in an independent, constructive and purposeful manner. They can operate only as the loyal pupils of the Western masters. They have little understanding of the genius of their people and of the deep spiritual unrest, skepticism and disgust the Western society today is afflicted with. They are insensitive to the working of the laws of evolution and change in respect of the intellectual processes of the West.

Double-dealing of Preachers of Atheism and Irreligiousness.

What is the attitude of the standard-bearers of broadmindedness, progressivism and irreligiousness, who have blown the trumpet of modernism in the Islamic World, in their own homelands and spheres of influence? Have they thrust the cult of agnosticism on their states or proved to be devoutly religious, reactionary and revivalist at the time of trial and adversity?

A great deal has already been written as far as the governments and intellectuals of the Christian World are concerned.[1] The evangelical spirit and hatred and vindictiveness against the Turks which oozes out of the writings of the Christian Orientalists on the Crusades is also known to everyone. Among the experts on oriental languages and culture (who are the foremost protagonists of secularism, scepticism and revolt against the Way of Law for the World of Islam) the Jews are in the majority who are famous for their narrow-mindedness, conservatism and revivalism in respect of their own religion and co-religionists. The state of Israel, itself, has been founded on religious lines. The way it has adhered to the teachings of the Torah,from the principles of government and state organisation to the everyday existence of its cilizens,and from religious duties and injunctions to finance and politics,should not only be an eye-opener to the Muslims but also a matter of shame. It shows that there are two tongues in the mouths of the 'progressives', one for speaking to their own people and the other for speaking to others, and the entire preaching of secularism, irreligiousness and atheism is intended only for the simple-minded Muslims who have just attained political freedom after centuries of serfdom.

We reproduce a few extracts from an essay by a former Arab Communist leader who had been closely associated for a long time with Jewish Communists to bring home our point. He writes :

> "A state has been founded, in the heart of the Arab World, on the name of a Prophet of the Old Testament. It has no Constitution for all the religious parties are insistent upon adopting the Torah as the Constitution. In it, it is legally prohibited to work on Saturdays but that does not adversely affect its economy or dealings with international Banks which close on Sundays ; on the other hand, it insists that the weekly congregations in the Churches should

1. For instance see Shikaib Arslan's *Huzir-el-Aalam-el-Islam*, Vol. III, pp. 353-364

continue to be held on Sundays. The cooking of meals for the Armed Forces is also forbidden on Saturdays by this Government.

"Moshe Dayan in his book, 'The story of a Soldier', writes :

'On Saturday (June 3) we ate the food cooked with the special permission of the Great Patriarch'.

"The Israeli Army, which is soon to be equipped with nuclear weapons, abstains from cooking meals on Saturdays; Ben Gurion and Shazar walk on foot for one and a half mile with the funeral of Mr. Churchill because it was Saturday and the use of a conveyance on that day is forbidden in Torah. At that time, Ben Gurion was 78 years old and Shazar 76.

"But the English journalism and public opinion saw nothing ridiculous in it; on the contrary, it was most commendable.

"In the same way, half of the devotees in the ancient mosques of Hazrat Ibrahim (Abraham) at el-Khalil, which the Jews have converted into a synagogue, are Israeli soldiers. The time of the breaking of the fasts is announced through the sounding of the siren. Pork is not served on the planes of the Israeli Airlines and the ships of its navigational service. Authorised religious political parties are functioning there and command much influence. Civil marriage has been declared unlawful so much so that the grandson of Ben Gurion was refused Israeli citizenship on the ground that his mother was not a Jewess. Hebrew is the official language and it is through it that they have learnt the science and technology which can put the radar and the rockets out of order and destroy the aircraft. In this very language they have produced literature that has won them the Nobel Prize.

"But right at that time it slipped its agents into our society the real aim of whose activities is to create a division between religion and politics. They go into a fit when they

hear that in such and such an Islamic country Islam is going to be declared the State religion and fill the columns of newspapers and periodicals dilating upon the harmful effects of Ramadhan on national production and development.

"On the other side, the state of some of the Islamic countries is that in the flush of secularism and progressive outlook the cry of *Allah-O-Akbar* was banned by them at the time of fighting. It was re-introduced fifteen months after the War of June, 1967.

"What is the conduct of Israel as compared to it? You can imagine about it from the fact that a verse from the Torah was written on the tank that was the first to enter Sinai.

"In respect of language, the hardness of Arabic and its script has become a most important issue with us. Sometimes, we talk of adopting the Latin script, and, sometimes, we try to eject Arabic from the domain of learning and scholarship by condemning it has an archaic language. There the position is that Hebrew which had died two thousand years ago has now become the language of literature, journalism, science and politics."[1]

In the educational field the policy of Israel can be judged from the facts given below which have been compiled from the writings of the leading educationists of West Asia.

Dr. Rodder Mathews and Dr. Matti Aqrawi have made the following observations in their book entitled *El-Tarbiyata Fil Sharqi-el-Arabi*:

"The most noteworthy feature of the schools in Israel is that all the subjects are taught in Hebrew (apart from English, French and Arabic), and religious instruction is strictly prescribed at all the stages of education, which is held to be the foundation of Zionism and the real source of its success.

1. *Al-Ba'ath-el-Islami*, April 1970

> "In Israel all categories of schools and their character and outlook are governed by the Parties with which the guardians of their scholars are associated. In spite of the differences of educational, religious and political character and attitudes these Parties are agreed on the fundamental issue of theological instruction and take particular care to provide it. Some of them believe that the religious traditions of the Jews are the minaret of light from which the educational system should seek guidance and inspiration and some regard it essential for the teachers to be traditionalists, i.e., adherents of the true traditions of Judaism".

The journal *Filistin* has published an article dealing with the higher education in Israel which is based upon the report of the Higher Committee of Palestine called, 'Study and Research'. It says:

> "The main purpose of higher education in Israel is the preservation and advancement of the creed of Judaism and the growth and promotion of the feelings of loyalty for it. Together with it, it also aims at teaching the art of publicizing Israel and winning friends for it. Figures reproduced in the Report show how lavishly Israel spends on the revival and development of the Hebrew language and the maintenance and extension of its universities".

After knowing about the double-faced policy pursued by the non-Muslim champions of broadmindedness and agnosticism in respect of their own and the Islamic countries it is strange how easily the leaders and intellectuals of the Muslim World have succumbed to the hypocritical propaganda of secularism and irreligiousness. Perhaps the Jewish and Christian writers and Orientalists themselves did not expect it to be so easy to lure away the leaders of Islamic thought and affairs to the ideas and aspirations disseminated by them in their midst. An example of the mental insolvency and self-deception displayed by Muslim leadership in the Twentieth Century will be hard to find in the intellectual and cultural history of the world.

Vulgar Extravagance

Economically, the Islamic countries are, on the whole, backward and dependent on others even for some of the basic necessities of life. The states among them which are more thickly populated are, particularly, poor and the standard of living in them is shockingly low. Yet their governments are inordinately fond of flaunting the manners of the rich and the advanced countries of the West. Whether they need them or not, the Muslim States must open their legations and embassies all over the world. And, then, in these establishments all those practices are dutifully observed which have been made popular by the Western nations, without giving a thought to the scant respect these nations usually show to religious and moral obligations. In the embassies of Arab and Islamic countries, for instance, fabulous banquets and cocktail parties are given on the so-called national occasions in which poor man's money is squandered like water. These diplomatic missions, on the other hand, take no interest generally in the popularisation of Islamic doctrines and ideals or in the religious uplift of Muslims living in countries to which they are assigned.

The rulers of many Muslim countries, including even those who swear by democracy and socialism, are guilty of vulgar extravagance. They live so lavishly that it is difficult to believe that they belong to countries known in the world for poverty and backwardness and want their people still to accept them as champions of social and economic justice and equality. The following extract from the *Sunday Telegraph* of London[1] concerning the life and activities of President Soekarno of Indonesia speaks for itself:

> "President Soekarno of Indonesia," it reads, "spent about £ 5,000/-[2] a day during his stay in Tokyo. He had a retinue of 16 officers. Geisha girls and other women of pleasure were regularly invited to the hotel he was staying

1. Dated January 21, 1964
2. Rs. 90,000/- in Indian money (after devaluation).

in, at a daily rent of £ 55. The arrival at all hours of the day and night of these girls was a constant source of anxiety to the fifty security men deputed to look after his safety."

"The Japanese Foreign Office is worried over the frequency of President Soekarno's visits to Tokyo and his well-known diversions but it has so far refrained from expressing its resentment for Japan is interested in the natural resources of Indonesia."[1]

State of Feud

In consequence of it all, one encounters in almost all the Muslim countries a state of feud between the leaders and the people. The two are found generally pulling in opposite directions. The bulk of the Muslim people everywhere are not willing to forsake their faith and historical legacy. They do not want to be deprived of the springs of life and strength Islam uncovered for them and for the preservation of which Muslim redeemers and reformers have toiled during all these centuries with their sweat and blood. To wear down popular resistance, the leaders of Islamic countries take recourse to punitive measures and push forward their programmes of reform with an iron hand. The people, on their side, develop an attitude of sullenness and animosity towards their leaders since they are always at war with their natural yearnings and sentiments. The leaders want to govern with the aid of slogans and ideologies which leave them cold and evoke little response in their hearts. These slogans and ideologies are devoid of the power to inspire them to the heights where the prospect of suffering and sacrifice acquires greater fascination than life itself. The Muslim ruling classes themselves are becoming conscious of the basic ineffectiveness of their chosen catch-words. They have begun to realise that through them it is just not possible to reach the inner depths of their people. Hence, at all moments of destiny, and at every critical turn-about of history, they are

1. Translated from Urdu

prone to fall back upon the soul-stirring concepts of religion like the divine sublimity of *Jehad* and martyrdom in the path of faith. But, once the day is won and the crisis is tided over they lose no time in reverting back to their old and favourite themes and forgetting that they have to deal with a people who are basically religious and imbued with a spiritual fervour of limitless possibilities which can be turned into the greatest force known to mankind with a little care and discipline.

Latent Potentialities

The tremendous potentialities of Muslims are, thus, being frittered away by their leaders. Could their talents and capabilities for progress and advancement be exploited more judiciously and were their leaders more realistic than dogmatic, miraculous results would have followed and the Islamic countries would, today, be constituting the third most important block in the world. If it is not so, it is solely owing to the palpable shortsightedness and blind imitativeness of the Muslim rulers, and this, in turn, is due directly to the alien civilisation they have zestfully borrowed from the West and placed on the pedestal of divinity.

Consequences

The adoption of the Western forms of life and social practices is fraught with the gravest consequences for the Muslim society. The West, today, is afflicted with a sort of moral leprosy which is eating fast into its vitals and filling the whole world with its stench. At the back of the dreadful malady lies the wanton lewdness and moral anarchy which has assumed beastly proportions. The reckless freedom of women, the uninhibited inter-mixing of the two sexes and alchoholism have contributed in no mean measure to the alarming situation. If an Islamic country goes the same way and abolishes the *purdah*, gives unbridled freedom to women and introduces co-education and encourages free intercourse between men and women, it has no right to hope for a different end. It is destined to land itself

in the same moral and sexual chaos and turmoil, symptoms of which have already begun to raise their head in Muslim countries where the privileged classes, in their over-eagerness to emulate the West, have pulled down the social and moral barriers between the two sexes in the name of freedom and equality and provided them with an unrestricted opportunity to mix with each other. Cinema, television, cheap journalism, dirty and pornographic literature are doing the rest. The law of nature is inexorable. It makes no distinction.

CHAPTER THREE

THE UNIVERSAL DRIFT TOWARDS WESTERNISATION—ITS CAUSES AND REMEDY

HAVING examined the steady advance of Modernism and Westernisation in the Muslim East, under the encouragement provided by the Kemalist Movement of Turkey, and seen how the leaders of almost all the newly-emancipated Islamic countries are in complete agreement with the views propounded by Kemal Ataturk and the Muslim intelligentsia and upper classes everywhere are in favour of the acceptance of the Western social and cultural forms and concepts, it would seem necessary to study, in some detail, the reasons underlying the trend. Is it merely an extemporaneous development springing solely from the impact made by the powerful personality of Kemal Ataturk, or are there some deeper and more solid factors operating behind it? Why is it that every Muslim country which emerges in the present-day world must tread the path of Kemalism and deem it essential for its progress and stability to go all out for the ideology of Westernisation?

Western System of Education

Every educational system possesses a distinctive spirit and character which is an echo and reflection of the views and ideals and intuitive attitude towards life and its problems of its designers and formulators. This imparts a positive and definite

personality to it. The spirit of an educational system runs through its entire structure, transcending philosophy, literature, fine arts and social and even exact sciences. To isolate a system of education from its spirit and essence is not an easy task. It will require men of outstanding faith, vision and ability to choose from it what is 'good' and to discard what is 'evil'. It may not be so hard in physical and empirical sciences but where philosophy and literature and the social sciences are concerned the drawing of a line between the shadow and the substance is bound to be exacting. More specially, when a community characterised by a definite and comprehensive creed, an eternal code and philosophy of life and a history which is not merely a collection of the junk and litter of the past but is still capable of showing light to the future generations, and for which the personality of the holy Prophet and the period of his ministry occupy the place of an ideal, accepts for itself the educational system of another community or period of time which is diamentrically opposed to its own spiritual and ethical destiny and cultural make-up, a clash between the two is bound to occur at each step making it impossible for it, ultimately, to uphold, revere or carry forward the one without denying or rejecting the other. In a situation like this, there first takes place the intellectual confrontation, then moral and spiritual uncertainty comes in which, in due course, is followed by the repudiation of one's own faith and the substitution of the traditional concept of life with new norms and values. This is a natural process, and, like all natural processes, it makes no exceptions. No amount of wishful thinking or the pricking of the conscience or the adoption of piecemeal or outward measures can prevent it from taking its course. Its advance can be slowed down but it cannot be halted at any stage. A tree growing according to the natural law of its development must send forth new leaves and branches at the appropriate time. It must bear fruit in its own way. It is in our hands not to plant it at all, or if it has already been planted, to allow it to wither away by withholding water from it or to cut it down from the roots if it has attained maturity. But we simply cannot stop a healthy

and flourishing tree from blossoming up at the appointed time.

The same is true for the Western system of education. It is endowed with a distinctive temperament and personality which is representative of the innate disposition and ideals of its architects and of the Western people, as a whole. It is the product of a thousand years of evolution. When this system is introduced in an Islamic society it can lead only to its decline, both intellectually and spiritually. In the end, there can be nothing but mental and religious apostasy. As a European Muslim commentator with a vast experience of the Western educational design and the consequences of its application in the East has said :

> "In the previous chapters some reasons have been given for the opinion that Islam and the Western civilisations, being built on diametrically opposed conceptions of life, are not compatible with each other. This being so, how could we expect that the education of Muslim youth on Western lines, an education based entirely on Western cultural experiences and exigencies, would remain free from anti-Islamic influences?
>
> "We are not justified to expect this. Except in rare cases, where a particularly brilliant mind triumphs over the educational matter, the Western education of Muslim youth is bound to undermine their will to believe, their will to regard themselves as representatives of the peculiar theocratic civilisation of Islam. There can be no doubt whatever that the religious belief is rapidly losing ground among the 'intelligentsia' educated on Western lines."

Proceeding, further, the writer says :

> "If the tuition of European literature, in the form it is prevalent today in many Muslim institutions, contributes to the estrangement of young Muslims from Islam, the same in a still larger measure is true of the European interpretation of world-history. In it the old attitude 'Romans versus Barbarians' very distinctly comes to its own. Such a presentation of history has for its unavowed goal to prove

that the Western races and their civilisation are superior to anything that has been or could be produced in this world, and so to give a sort of moral justification to the Western quest of domination and material power."[1]

And, further :

"The only effect such historical training can have upon the minds of young non-European people will always be the feeling of inferiority so far as their own culture, their own historical past and their own future possibilities are concerned. They are systematically trained to disdain their own past and their own future—unless it be a future surrendered to Western ideals.

"In order to counteract these evil effects, the conscious leaders of Islamic thought should do their best to revise the tuition of history in Muslim institutions. This is a difficult task, no doubt, and it will need a thorough overhauling of the historical investigation, before a new history of the world, as seen with Muslim eyes, is created. But if the task is difficult, it is, none the less, possible, and, moreover, imperative. Otherwise our young generation will continue to be fed with undercurrents of a contempt for Islam ; and the result will be a daily deepening inferiority complex."[2]

Summing up the discussion, Mohammad Asad courageously observes that :

"If Muslims have been negligent, in the past, of scientfic research, they cannot hope to repair that mistake today by an unresticted acceptance of Western learning. All our scientific backwardness and our poverty stand no comprison whatever with the deadly effect which our blind following of the Western educational structure would have on the religious possibilities of the Muslim world. If we wish to preserve the reality of Islam as a cultural factor, we must guard against the intellectual atmosphere of the Western

1. Road to Mecca, *op. cit*, p. 85.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87

Civilisation which is about to conquer our society and our inclinations. By imitating the manners and the mode of life of the West, the Muslims are being gradually forced to adopt the Western outlook; the imitation of outward appearance leads, by degrees, to a corresponding assimilation of the mental disposition."[1]

Some of the Western educationists, too, who were responsible for introducing their mode of education in the Eastern and Asian lands are known to have made a similar forecast. Thus, Lord Macaulay, who presided over the committee which was appointed to decide whether education should be imparted to the Indians in their own language or in English pleaded for the adoption of the English language in the following terms: "We must do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, opinions, words and intellect."[2]

This Western educational system was in the nature of a slow but merciless genocide practised on the Eastern people by the ruling West. Instead of the old and condemned method of physical extermination the European educationists preferred to cast a whole generation into their mould, and with this end intellectual factories were set up from place to place under the sanctified names of schools and colleges. The following verses from Akbar Allahabadi throw a flood of light on the abominable plan:

> Pharaoh would not have earned notoriety for infanticide,
> Had the idea of founding a College crossed his mind.
> Rulers of the East break the enemy's head,
> Those of the West change his disposition.

Several years later, Iqbal who had a taste of the Western

1. *Ibid.*, p. 89

2. Adapted from B.D. Basu: History of Education in India under the Rule of East India Company, p. 87

educational structure at first hand, gave expression to the same view in a more thoughtful manner. He said :

Be not complacent about the education you receive,
Through it the soul of a nation they can kill ;
Treat its Ego with the acid of education,
When it softens, give it the shape you please.

Iqbal considers the Western educational system to be a deeply laid conspiracy against morality and religion :

The system of education of the men of Church,
Is but a conspiracy against compassion and faith.

Iqbal was one of the very few fortunate young men from the World of Islam who did not only make the coast safely after having dived full length into the ocean of Western education but also brought with them some priceless pearls like the restoration of confidence in themselves and in the eternity and comprehensiveness of the message of Islam. Though it is difficult to say that Iqbal remained completely unaffected by Western philosophy and education or that his religious understanding was wholly in conformity with the teachings of the Book and the *Sunnah* and the pious precursors, the 'Fire of Nimrud' had definitely failed to eat up his Islamic individuality as the case had been with thousands of his contemporaries. He was quite within his rights to proclaim :

The spell of modern education I broke,[1]
I picked the grain, left the net alone ;
God knows how in the manner of Ibrahim,
I sat in its fire easy in mind.

Of great value in this connection also is the opinion of Maulana Mohammad Ali who was born and brought up in a strictly religious environment but received all his education on Western lines and graduated, finally, from Oxford. On the effects of Western education the Maulana writes :

"The British Government professed a complete religious

1. Iqbal's Lectures on *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* offer a case in point in which an open attempt has been made to give a philosophical interpretation to transcendental truths.

neutrality, and carried it into practice by a rigorous exclusion of all religious, and even moral teaching, except such as the boys were left to find for themselves in the literature provided in the 'Readers' in English and Oriental languages. On the other hand, the entire outlook of the education which the Government did provide for the youth of India was 'Modern' in its destructiveness. It tended to breed in the student an arrogant omniscience, and to destroy along with age-old blind beliefs in superstition, all respect for Tradition and Authority. No doubt in course of time, it led to the awakening of a genuine spirit of enquiry and a search for truth. But in its first onset it was mainly destructive, and what little it substituted in the place of the superstitions it destroyed was itself based on blind belief and superstitions, albeit 'Modern'."[1]

W. C. Smith, who is well-acquainted with the trends and movements operating in the contemporary Muslim world has also acknowledged the deep and wide-reaching influence exercised by the Western education and educational institutions on the modern-educated Muslim generations in these words:

"From the late nineteenth century to the First World War, European liberalism was at its height. So also was European ascendancy. Many Muslims went to the West and came to know, even in part to admire, its spirit and values. This was true specially of some of those students who in increasing numbers were seeking education in its universities. Much of the West came to the Muslim World—again, not least its educational institutions, rearing indigenously a generation deeply exposed to Western modernity. Many new ideas, and at least equally important, the subtle presupposition of ideas, and new evaluations, new orientations, were inculcated in these formally educational ways. In addition, there was increasing penetration of other Western and modern institutions:

1. Muhammad Ali: My Life: A Fragment (1942), p. 23

legal, political, social and many others. To some extent these were imposed, to some extent sought after. Some Muslims resisted, some welcomed them, or were brought up to or gradually came to welcome them; eventually many came to take them for granted. The process has continued apace."[1]

But, apart from a handful of exceptions like Iqbal and Mohammad Ali, whose natural wholesomeness of disposition or the experiences they had to pass through in life protected their Islamic spirit and understanding from the corrosive influence of Western thought and civilisation, the Muslim educated classes of the entire Islamic World, particularly of the middle Eastern countries, have, on the whole, suffered such a radical transformation at the hands of the Western educational design that neither Islam, in its true form and character, can fit into their 'progressive' mental make-up nor can they bring themselves round to a ready and willing acceptance of the general Islamic pattern of society.

The stress on religion being a private affair which should not be permitted to meddle in government and politics, the arbitrary equation of Islam with the Christian Church, the denunciation of religion as a hindrance to progress and refinement, the identification of Muslim Ulema with the Christian ecclesiastics of the medieval times, the advocacy of the right of women to compete freely with men in all the walks of life, the acceptance of *purdah*, in all its forms, as a relic of the hateful *harems* of the bygone days and a painful reminder of the tyranny of the male, the assertion that the Islamic laws of inheritance, marriage and divorce were the handiwork of the Muslim jurists of the 6th and the 7th centuries which served the limited needs of the elementary social organisation of their time but had now become outmoded and should, therefore, be amended and brought on a level with the modern Western standards, the inclination to treat usury, drink, gambling and sexual wayward-

1. Islam in Modern History (1957), pp. 63-64

ness as not so wicked, the passionate upholding of the creed of nationalism the revival of the languages, customs and civilisation of the pre-Islamic past and numerous other theories and ideas which are held sacrosanct by the modern-educated Muslims are the direct fruits of the Western educational system and, in the words of Mohammad Asad, of the "intellectual atmosphere" it breeds.

From Turkey to Indonesia, the leaders of all the Muslim countries are the products of this very educational design. Such of them as did not have the opportunity of going to the West had their entire education in institutions established in their own lands on the Western model. Many of these leaders have been in military colleges where particular care is taken to follow the plan of training and instruction laid down in the West.

The confrontation which is taking place today in the Islamic World between the two widely different mental attitudes and philosophies of life and terminating, generally, in the triumph of the more organised and better-privileged West-oriented class is, in these circumstances, natural and inevitable. It could just not be otherwise.

Remedy

There is only one remedy of the present malaise, however slow and painstaking it may seem. It lies in a total reorientation of the educational system in the Islamic lands with the object of bringing it in accord with the spiritual needs and aspirations of the Muslims. It will be necessary to purge all the subjects of study of the poison of excessive materialism and of the denial of the higher moral and spiritual values, and to inject into them, in its place, the spirit of piety and godliness and solicitude for the Hereafter. From literature to philosophy and from material sciences to politics and sociology, all the branches of learning will have to be cast into a new mould, the intellectual hold of the West will have to be broken and its ideological and academical contribution carefully reassessed.

The enormous harm the ascendency of the West has done to mankind should be brought to light without fear or favour. In brief, the Western arts and sciences must be taught and studied in Muslim countries but without a salvish submission to the mental attitude of the West.

In every progressive country which holds dear its freedom and seeks to preserve its identity it has now come to be admitted that the aim of education is to foster and strengthen the basic values of life in which the society believes and which have become a part of its tradition. Such being the case, the primary object of the educational system of a civilised country is to instil into the hearts of the younger generations these fundamental concepts so effectively that they may become with them a burning reality, worthy of being preserved at all costs and at all times.

Educationists, everywhere, are agreed that a nation always strives to make its educational set-up correspond with its ideology. Thus, Sir Percy Neinn writes :

> "Many definitions have been given of the word 'education' but underlying them all is the conception that it denotes an attempt on the part of the adult members of a human society to shape the development of the coming generations in accordance with its own ideals of life.
>
> "It is the function of a school............to bring to bear upon the pupil the spiritual forces which are typical of the national ethos and to train him to take his part in conserving and developing the life of the community."[1]

Similar ideas have been expressed by Sir John Dewey[2] who can be described as the greatest educationist the United States of America has yet produced. He says :

> "A community or social group sustains itself through continuous self-renewal...........and this renewal takes place by means of the educational growth of the immature

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica (1949), Vol. VII, p. 964
2. John Dewey : Democracy and Education (1961) p. 12

members of the group. By various agencies, unintentional and designed, a society transforms uninitiated and seemingly alien beings into robust trustees of its own resources and ideals...........Education is, thus, a fostering, a nurturing, and a cultivating process..............We are concerned with the general features of the way in which a social group brings up its immature members into its own social form."

Yet another American educationist, Prof. W. R. Nibblet, remarks:

"It (education) is a continuation of the process of growing into a full human being which took place physically in the nine months before we were born. But now it is the culture of the society which is the womb, and the spirit, not the body, which is gestated."[2]

And, finally, we have the opinion of J. B. Conant who says:

"I do not believe that educational practices are an exportable commodity...........At times, in our own history, attempts to import a British or American concept have done more harm than good."[3]

For a community which claims to be Divinely-inspired and has its own ideology and programme of life and which can also boast of a glorious cultural and historical heritage it is, therefore, neither wise nor justifiable to borrow its educational structure from an outside agency or to depend in the spheres of the training and up-bringing of its youth on authorities which do not believe whole-heartedly in the ideals that form the cornerstone of its collective existence. All the thinkers of the East and the West are unanimous on this point. It would have been clear from the extracts we have just reproduced that they regard education primarily as a means for the self-perpetuation of an accepted culture. The underlying purpose of education, according to them, is to carry forth the cultural and spiritual heritage of

1. Adapted from A.C. Hughes: Education: Some Fundamental Problems (1954), p. 84

2. J.B. Conant: Education and Liberty, p. 2

human society to its coming generations and impress upon the hearts and minds of its immature members the values and ideals it holds precious.

Even the Communist countries which are supposed to be up in arms against the accepted social and cultural norms and which flourish themselves as the representatives of a radical mental and spiritual change make full use of education for purposes indicated above and do not lag behind the so-called Capitalist societies in making it the chief instrument for shaping the development of the younger generations in accordance with their ideology. For instance, a Russian scholar writes about the concept of science in the Soviet Union in the following words:

> "The fundamental feature of Soviet science is that it alone possesses a clear philosophical basis. Such a basis is essential in scientific enquiry. For our science Dialectical Materialism of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin is the basis."
>
> "Our aim is to enter the arena of world science with the irresistible weapons of Dialectical Materialism and (in that world arena of science) we shall combat all foreign concepts antagonistic to ours."[1]

Is it not, then, a matter of utmost sorrow that the Muslim countries alone are, today, plagued by an absence of purposiveness in education and a sort of intellectual anarchy? In these countries there has developed a contradiction between what it is and what it should be, and the religious convictions of their people, their spiritual ideals and aspirations and the system of education that has been imported in them from abroad are pulling in wholly opposite directions. Teachers and educationists have come to operate there who neither have faith in these convictions nor are interested in their encouragement and are totally indifferent to the need of striking a balance between the ideals of faith and the hard realities of life, although the religion they follow is blessed with limitless potentialities and resources. In truth, it was the duty

1. Reproduced from W. Montgomery: From Luther to Hitler

of the Muslim countries to wipe out all such elements that constitute a danger to their existence for these are the guardians of the ultimate Message revealed by God to mankind through the Last of His Apostles. It could easily be expected of them to show a greater regard to their faith and system of morality than the European nations do to their own and be more sensitive about them. But, the present position is that these countries approach the alien peoples and their systems of thought and life with a begging bowl and imbibe what they see and learn in the Western countries without putting it to scrutiny. They adopt their arts and sciences like blind, thoughtless imitators and introduce them as they are among their people. They do not subordinate their system of education to the eternal teachings of Islam, to Divine Apostleship and to their own impeccable sciences. They do not try to remove the impediments to the realisation of this end nor care to bring about conditions of cohesion between true religion and modern education.

The World of Islam has become the battle-ground of conflicting forces while its leaders are busy with their dirty game. A continuous struggle is going on in it between faith and education, between the transcendental truths and the material phenomena. Belief and skepticism, Islam and hypocrisy, morality and greed, self-abnegation and aggrandisement are locked with each other in deadly combat. Even the Western observes are, sometimes, shocked at the dismal spectacle the Muslim countries are presenting on account of these inner tensions and conflicts while the role they expect Islam to play in the world of tomorrow is wholly different. Prof. Charles L. Geddes of the American Institute of Islamic Studies, thus, had the following to say in a speech delivered at Karachi in 1966 :

> "Islam has all the characteristics to play a vital role in the affairs of the nations to bring about peace and understanding in the world.........The West expects that Muslims who had a divine religion and glorious past of their own would explain the basic tenets and philosophy of life to the West.........and play their destined role in the world of to-

morrow as harbingers of peace."[1]

But, this hope can be realised only when a truly Islamic society comes into existence, a society which is endowed with faith as well as learning, and, at the same time, regards its message to be not only beneficial but, also, necessary for mankind. Such a community of Muslims alone can redeem the world and set it forward on the path of peace, progress and happiness.

A Muslim society of this kind can be brought into being only through the adoption of a comprehensive and well-balanced system of education. From the Islamic point of view education can be called comprehensive and well-balanced simply when it represents a harmonious blending of faith with knowledge and can assure the all-round development of human personality by creating intellectual, moral, spiritual and aesthetic conditions of education that are consistent with the true ideals of Islam.

Fortunately, a beginning towards it has been made and some educational circles in Muslim countries have come forward to discharge the duty of evolving such a system of education.[2] It is a very important and encouraging development but it will require a great deal of perseverance, vision and sincerity for its successful implementation. No greater service than this can be rendered to Islam and Muslims in the present-day world. Anyone who carries it out will, undoubtedly, be remembered by the coming generations as their greatest friend and benefactor.

We will now take into account some of the obstacles that lie in the way of the emergence of an ideal educational system in the Muslim World. These are :—

(*i*) The borrowing of the educational system and courses of study from abroad ;

(*ii*) The practice of bringing in teachers from the West who, even if they do not deliberately propagate their cultural

1. Reproduced from "Islamic Education" (Lahore) March-April, 1968, p. 13

2. The educational programme chalked out by Dr. Mohammad Rafiuddin of Pakistan deserves specially to be mentioned in this connection

and intellectual concepts, can hardly be expected to take any real interest in the preaching of Islamic ideals or the development of an Islamic personality;

(*iii*) The sending of immature Muslim students to the Western countries for higher studies in whom the Islamic consciousness and the sense of Islamic values and traditions is not strong enough to resist the pressures of an alien environment. The result is that they get overwhelmed by what they see, read and hear in those lands and when they return home a majority of them fall a prey to mental confusion which gives rise to all sorts of dissensions in the society and the curse of an unhealthy and misguided leadership ultimately descends on it. Signs and manifestations of it can easily be seen in the Arab World; and

(*iv*) The attachment of exaggerated importance to foreign languages which is acting to the detriment of the growth of the Arabic language and the Islamic sciences. The teaching of several languages at the elementary stage is in itself not looked upon with favour by the experts in the line. Consequently, at a number of Eastern countries the process of the ejection of foreign languages from the school curriculum has already begun though with an overdose of parochial feeling. Anyway, the Arab countries ought to have displayed greater caution and taken proper steps to safeguard the interests of their great language and to prevent the alien languages from creating dissensions and perverting the minds of the younger generations since these countries form the homeland of the Arabic language and the birthplace of the Quran.

Apart from these measures, it is also necessary that all such teachers and professors are removed from service and kept at a safe distance from the educational institutions of the Muslim countries who profess allegiance to un-Islamic ideologies and do not admit that the lands they belong to are possessed of a civilisation of their own and are the custodians of a special message

and Apostleship and that the young men and women who are under their charge are the successors of a glorious community of men that had given a unique faith and an imperishable ideology to the world. When no ideological State, today, thinks it fit to entrust the education of its youth to persons who hold views inimical to its basic philosophy and concept of life, is it not strange that in Islamic countries confirmed atheists and skeptics who deny the existence of God and the raising up of the Prophets and reject Islam as a Divine message bequeathed to mankind for its eternal guidance should be left free to propagate their views among their immature members who are going to function as the leaders of their people tomorrow? This is exactly what is happening in the Muslim lands and it is high time that it stopped.

This process, of course, is going to be long and difficult but there is no other way to push back the powerful tide of Modernism and Westernisation which is sweeping over the entire Islamic World and threatening its cultural and intellectual foundations. To meet the mental and moral challenge of the Western Civilisation has become a matter of life and death for Muslims for on account of it the struggle and sacrifices of the Muslim masses to which their countries owe their freedom and political re-birth have got shamelessly converted into the tinder of so-called progressivism and the Muslim peoples are being driven by their leaders like a herd of cattle towards a destination that has nothing to do with what they had toiled and suffered for.

The strength of the British rule in India was attributable, largely, to the Westernised outlook and loyalty and efficiency of the Indian Civil Servants who provided the steel-frame which ensured the successful running of the country for a hundred years according to the wishes of the alien masters. The same method will have to be employed once again, but in a reverse form, to bring about the much needed change in the Muslim countries. In order to win these countries back to the Islamic way of life it will be necessary to provide for the Islamic education and

upbringing of the future generations that are going to guide the destinies of their lands tomorrow and to revise and reconstruct the educational set-up which produces the governing classes.[1]

Western Orientalists

Western scholars of Islamic faith, history and civilisation must bear a large share of responsibility for the disillusionment with Islam, skepticism and moral and spiritual apathy, and the overpowering urges of modernism and reform found in the ruling classes of Muslim countries today. The Western Orientalists are held in great reverence in the political and literary circles of the East because of their learning and scholarship and their views and conclusions are regarded by them to be the last word on Eastern and Islamic problems.

A long trail of history, stretching back to the Seventeenth Century, lies behind the Western interest in Orientology. Religious as well as political and economic factors have played their part in its growth. The religious factor, however, has always been pretty obvious. For the propagation of the Christian faith in the East it was found expedient to present a distorted picture of Islam so that the superiority of Christianity could be asserted as a self-evident truth and the younger and Western educated Muslims persuaded to opt out for it as a matter of course.

1. The need of setting up of Muslim Boarding Houses assumes a greater significance in the current context of things wherein Muslim schools and colleges have lost much of their utility as the nurseries of the up and coming intelligentsia. The establishment of Muslim Boarding Houses should not present too much of a difficulty, both in terms of money and organisation, while the benefits accruing from it will be immense. In countries where the control and management of the educational structure has gone out of the hands of the true and earnest representatives of Islamic faith and civilisation and there is not much hope,also,of its early restoration, the opening of Muslim Boarding Houses of the kind indicated above can offer a convenient mechanism for the proper moral and spiritual upbringing of Muslim youth. In addition to the Islamic world, such hostels are needed, also,in the Western countries where a large number of Muslim students go every year for the completion of their studies.

Hence, Orientology and proselytisation have often been found to march hand in hand with each other. A large number of Orientalists are drawn from the priestly class and the Jews.

The political element becomes apparent when we see that the Orientalists have,generally,operated as the advance guard of Western colonialism. Their job has been to provide intellectual and literary ammunition for the usurpers and empire-builders of the West. They make it easier for the Western Powers to exploit the Eastern races for their political and economic ends by procuring for them diligently all the necessary information about their character, history, customs, language and literature. At the same time, the Western Orientalists take great pains to refute and repudiate the ideas and movements that can be inimical to the interests of the Western Imperialists and to create and sustain an intellectual atmosphere in which the pinch of exploitation is not felt by the subject races of the East. Thanks to the incessant campaign industriously kept up by these scholars, the Eastern peoples have become willing tools of their own degradation. They acknowledge gratefully the contribution made by the West and its civilisation to their progress and happiness and are so excessively infatuated by it that they want to emulate its modes and manners even after the attainment of political freedom.

Because of these advantages the Western Governments have never been found wanting in their appreciation of the services rendered by the Orientalists. A number of high-class journals devoted to Oriental studies are published regularly in the West, as for instance, the *Journal of the Near East* and the *Muslim World* in the U.S.A. and *Lemonde Musulmans* in France.

Besides religious and political considerations the commercial element, also, has not been lacking. Oriental studies are taken up by many scholars in the West as a lucrative occupation, and since there is always a ready market for the books on these subjects in the Eastern as well as the Western countries, publishing houses willingly encourage the literary endeavours of the Orientalists. Works on Orientology are appearing fast in Europe and the U.S.A. and these, generally, turn out to be good money-

spinners.

Nevertheless, some of the Western scholars of Orientology are undeniably inspired by the highest traditions of scholarship. They engage themselves in Eastern and Islamic studies solely because of sincere attachment to them. It would be dishonest to withhold admiration from them for their dedicated good work in the cause of learning. But for their tireless industry, priceless gems of the Oriental and Islamic storehouses of knowledge would have been lost or lying still in obscurity. Oriental works on subjects related to Islam and old and forgotten manuscripts constituting valuable sources of information have seen the light of day thanks to their boundless enthusiasm for research.

Yet, it must also be sorrowfully recorded that the Orientalists have not been able to derive any real benefit from the study of the Holy Quran, the Traditions and Islamic ethics, mysticism and jurisprudence. Their learning has failed to make any deep and lasting impression on their minds for the reason that results, generally, are governed by the motives with which a task is undertaken. The Orientalists, on the whole, are impelled by the desire to find out weaknesses in Islam and in the Islamic pattern of things which can be exploited to serve the political ends of the Christian West. Consequently, like the proverbial drain-inspectors, even in a blooming garden they take note only of objects that stink.

This attitude of the Orientalists does not remain confined to their individual selves. Were it so we would not have dwelt on it in these pages. The more serious and far-reaching aspect of it is that the Orientalists employ their indisputable talents to make capital of the aforesaid 'weaknesses' and to present a most hideous picture of them to the world ; they search them out with a microscope and then give a most exaggerated view of the whole thing to the readers. To make a mountain of a mole-hill is child's play with them. Their skill and perseverance in working out a distorted image of Islam is without a parallel in the domain of scholarship. They first set before themselves an objective and decide that, in any case, it has got to be achieved. Then they

proceed to make use of every piece of evidence they can lay their hands on. Whether the evidence is genuine or fake, or the argument correct or fallacious, does not seem to bother them. They have to arrive at a pre-determined conclusion, and they do it. They build up a whole edifice of reasoning by mixing up cleverly the false with the true in support of the views they have formed already in their minds. If they have to condemn a thing they will take special pains to discover a few good points in it, too, in order to impress the reader with their sincerity and fair-mindedness and to bring him into a receptive frame of mind. They develop the historical background of a person or movement and other social and psychological factors operating behind him and do it so cleverly that the person or movement begins to look like a product of his or its time and historical circumstances and the reader is persuaded to reject whatever transcendental significance or glory he or it may be entitled to. Among the Orientalists some dole out their poisonous stuff in such appropriate doses that the victim goes on absorbing it without suspecting anything. For the average reader their writings are, on the whole, deadly.

On the Quran, the life of the sacred Prophet and scholastic theology, on the holy Companions, the *Tab'een*,[1] the Traditionists, the Legists and the *Sufi*-saints and spiritual mentors, on the verification and compilation of the Traditions, the criterion of their reliability, and, their legal significance and applicability, on *Asma-ul-Rijal*[2] and origins of Islamic jurisprudence and its evolution; in short, on all subjects concerning Islam the works of the Orientalists are rarely free from an element of mischief which is calculated to produce an aversion against the Islamic faith and programme of life in a sensitive and intelligent person

1. The term is applied *par excellence* to those Muslims who followed the immediate Companions of the Prophet.

2. A special branch of learning evolved for ascertaining whether the narrator of a Tradition of the Holy Prophet is trustworthy or not and whether the Tradition narrated by him should be accepted or rejected.

not fully grounded in Islamic theology. To take stock of the perversion of truth deliberately indulged in by them and examine and analyse their errors and shortcomings will be beyond the scope of the present study. Here,we will simply summarise the basic mental attitude they persistently strive to put through and which their young, enthusiastic and so-called progressive-minded readers gulp up blindly like gospel truth. Their call and advocacy has provided a powerful incentive to the 'modernist' movements in the present-day Islamic World. The real nature and significance of these movements can hardly be appreciated without investigating into the thought-processes initiated by the Western Orientalists. An Egyptian scholar, Mohammad el-Bahi, has summarised in the following words, the favourite notions that characterise the writings of the Orientalists and serve as the common attributes of their literary endeavours :

> "The Orientalists commonly try to convey", he says, "that the allegiance of Muslim society to Islam endured only for a brief period of time. Those were the days when the Muslim society was in its infancy. At that time, an opportunity was afforded to bring about an integration between practical life and teachings of Islam, but, as soon as this short, elementary phase was over, a gulf was created between Islam and the Muslim society, and Islam ceased to be the guiding force of life. The more the Muslim society advanced and accepted changes and the consequences of the cultural, political, economic and other impressions it received from the outside world the more complete was the failure of Islam to adjust itself to the requirements of an evolving society. The gulf went on becoming wider and wider till the last seat of Muslim Caliphate, *i.e.*, modern Turkey formally announced the ejection of Islam from every-day life. Islam will have its place now, it was declared, only in the conscience of the individual. It will not intrude into the general social structure and remain solely a matter of quiet, personal expression within one's private

sphere of existence."

"The inability to implement the teachings of Islam constitutes, in its essence, the recognition of the logic of social compulsion. It is the outcome of the inability of Islam to influence the needs and circumstances of an ever-changing society in accordance with its postulates and to produce a workable synthesis between the two. Insistence on the observance of Islamic percepts in the modern times can only mean isolation from the mainstream of life and the willing acceptance of poverty, disease and all-round backwardness, as the case is with Saudi Arabia today which is the only country in the world to have adopted Islam as the cornerstone of social organisation and State policy, and can legitimately be cited as an outstanding example of the folly of sticking to Islam as a code of life.

"Progress and change is the immutable law of existence from which it is not possible to run away. Muslims must apply it to their Islam also so that they can keep abreast of the modern Western World and rescue themselves from the cess-pool of chaos and stupor. What is needed is to bring Islam deliberately under the working of this law by taking steps towards its revision and reformation in the light of contemporary realities. No other course is open to Muslims than to bow down to the law of progress and change and conform to the Western ideal in their own Oriental environment for the Western norms of life are the products of long human experience in the fields of thought and action. The Western people have employed the objective and the scientific method in the evolution of these norms and customs which does not allow the mind to be over-weighed with dogma and superstition and keeps it concentrated solely on the welfare and happiness of mankind.............."[1]

After a long experience of about two hundred years the Western Orientalists realised that there was a basic drawback in

1. *El-Fikr-el-Islami-el-Hadees*, pp. 181-84

their approach which prevented their efforts from bearing the desired fruits, and, sometimes, even provoked a strong and hostile reaction in Muslim circles. It was, indeed, very disturbing considering the type of work they were occupied with. So, on a careful reassessment of the whole situation it was resolved by them that instead of trying to change the Muslims the emphasis should now be on changing Islam itself through giving it a totally new interpretation and launching a concerted movement for its reformation from within. Where such movements were already at work, the Orientalists decided to lend them their whole-hearted support. Thus, Harry Dorman writes :

> "If the missionary is to be sensitive to the attitudes of reverence and humility wherever they are already found, he must be no less sensitive to the various reform movements in Islam and be ready to co-operate with them whenever it is possible and suitable to do so. Reform movements are earnest attempts to re-interpret religious teachings in the light of present experience, or to interpret new experience in the light of religious teachings, and they are, therefore, of primary importance for the missionary. This does not mean, of course, that every novel movement embraced by a few eccentrics is worthy of careful study ; it means that whenever there arises a truly religious expression of contemporary living that is trying to give spiritual interpretation to everyday experience, there growth is taking place and the spiritual forces are grappling with facts.
>
> "It is possible that one of these reform movements will have more significance for an eventual Muslim understanding of Christ than can now be imagined. It may even be that *in the next few years* the chief contribution of the missionary in Muslim lands will not be so much to the regeneration of individual Muslims as to the regeneration of Islam itself. Here at least is a field of opportunity which cannot be neglected. That it is open is clear from those last examples of apologetics that seemed to welcome a working together of Muslims and Christians–Daud's depreciation of

the bitter and destructive Muslim-Christian polemics, Nielson's symposium of contributions from both sides, and Quran's appreciation of the growing understanding between Muslims and Christians.

" An interesting line of investigation would be to study whether it is necessary for a Christian to love Muslims and to hate Islam, or whether it is possible to love Islam too and to seek its regeneration. Gibbs, for example, gives a vivid picture of some of the currents of thought at work in Islam, and points out the great leavening influence that will transform religious and secular attitude if 'an inexorable devotion to truth' can lead Islam to the habit of historical thinking in regard to her own past and present. Here is an expression of reverence for truth that will have far-reaching results for a great community."[1]

The same approach is discernible in the activities of all the pioneers of Islamic reform in the Muslim World during the last fifty years. It can be said to form the bedrock of the intellectual as well as practical aims and programmes of these self-appointed leaders of Islamic regeneration.

The Western scholars of Oriental research did their utmost to bring into disrepute the religious concepts of Islam and to extol and magnify in their place the moral and spiritual concepts of the Christian West. They interpreted the teachings of Islam with the deliberate object of distorting its values so that educated Muslims may lose faith in them and grow skeptical about everything associated with the Islamic design of life, at least, in the modern context of things, under the belief that Islam had grown outdated and could not be looked forward to any more to lend effective guidance in the contemporary world. It was condemned by them as reactionary to insist on it as the last and unchanging word of God in the progressive and fast-moving world of today. Yet, in the same breath, they advocated the revival of ancient civilisations that had died and got buried unceremoniously in the

1. Darman, H.G.: Towards Understanding Islam, p. 125

graveyard of history centuries ago. and whose resuscitation could lead only to the disruption of Islamic unity, to the ruination of the Arabic language and Islamic Civilisation and to the restoration of the pre-Islamic age of Ignorance and Paganism. It is under their inspiration that movements for the revival of ancient languages and civilisation have been started in Egypt, Iraq and North Africa and along the coast of Palestine and Lebanon and a whole band of their disciples and admirers is now operating in these parts of the Muslim world. The Orientalists and their followers began to say that the classical Arabic of the Quran could not answer the needs of the modern society, and, therefore, local and colloquial languages should be encouraged in its place and adopted as media of literary and journalistic expression throughout the Arab World. It was propagated by them so emphatically and with such astute reasoning that in Egypt some of the most accomplished writers and intellectuals were won over and they also began to espouse the cause of indigenous languages and even dialects.[1] If this movement is allowed to have its way each country and province of the Arab and Islamic World will, ultimately, begin to boast of its own language, Arabic will cease to be an international language, and the ties of the Arabs with the Quran and the Islamic literature will be broken as a result of which they will be stripped of their entire religious and spiritual heritage and thrown into the whirlpool of apostasy, dissension and strife.

Likewise, the Western Orientalists suggested the replacement of the Arabic by the Roman script and their pupils in the Arab countries, at once, took up the tune. For the Arabs this, too, can mean only that they lose their ability to read the Quran correctly and the whole of their cultural and literary inheritance becomes meaningless to them.

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1. Salama Moosa was the chief sponsor of the movement which also had the support of men like Mohammad Hasnain Heikel, Ahmed Amin and Ahmed Hasan-el-Zayyat.

From these activities and suggestions we can imagine what the real motives of the Western Orientalists are with regard to Islam and how deep is their antipathy towards it. The writings of a majority of them are directed against the very roots of Islam. Their game is to create doubt about the original sources of Islamic Jurisprudence. They encourage discord and strife in Muslim society and teach the Muslims to question the competence of their Jurists and Traditionists. Their works abound with shocking errors and ludicurous misunderstandings. Quite often they betray an awful ignorance of the elementary rules of Arabic grammar and idiom and are also guilty of shameless concealment, distortion and misrepresentation of facts. And yet, in the East and the West, they are regarded as an authority on Islamic studies. The modern-educated classes (including even senior scholars and academicians) swear by the objectivity of their approach and the profundity of their learning. The Eastern scholars of Oriental studies fail to impress them. In the Muslim East, Western Orientalists are held in such honour that many of them have been offered coveted memberships of the literary academies of Syria, Iraq and Egypt in which their views and opinions are sought reverentially. The intellectual poverty of the Arab and Islamic World becomes more emphasised when we find that even for purely Arab and Islamic subjects reliance is placed solely on studies produced by Western scholars. Their works are treated, generally, as the last word in the line. Books, for instance, by Nicholson, Hitti, Carl Brockleman and Schacht are regarded as unique and have been prescribed for study in the Departments of Arabic and Islamic studies of almost all the better known Universities of the East. In the same way, the Encyclopaedia of Islam compiled by Western Orientalists, which has seen several reprints in Europe and America and among whose contributors a handful of Muslims are also included, is rated as the most complete and authoritative epitome of knowledge on subjects relating to Islam and Muslims. It is now also being produced in Arabic in Egypt and in Urdu in Pakistan.

Muslim scholars and researchists must come forward to combat the growing influence of the Orientalists and the mischievous and skeptical habits of thought they are seeking to popularise in the upper strata of Muslim society. They should devote themselves to topics which are popular with the Western Orientalists and present the correct and healthy Islamic viewpoint on them and in a manner conforming with the highest standards of study and research. In originality of thought and depth of learning and in power of reasoning and authenticity of material, the studies undertaken by them ought to be even superior to those brought out by Western scholars. Moreover, our men of learning should also take up the examination of books written by the Orientalists so that they can expose the fallacies and distortions indulged in by them. The incorrect understanding of the original Arabic texts by the Western scholars, the blunders committed by them, knowingly or unknowingly, in their translation and adaptation and the inveracity of the references given by them must be brought to light, and their perversity, ill-will and political and religious prejudices laid bare for the world to see what a sinister conspiracy it all really is against Islam and Muslims.

Without the two-pronged campaign aimed simultaneously at the production of a high-class literature on subjects pertaining to Islam and the refutation of misconceptions and other destructive views and ideas propagated by the Orientalists it will not be possible to save the educated and effective sections of the *Millet* from their corrupting influence. And unless this is done and the rising Muslim intelligentsia made immune against the mischievous designs of the Western Orientalists the Muslim World will continue to be plagued by intellectual confusion and apostasy. The Islamic countries will remain at the mercy of the champions of Modernism and Westernisation and wherever the self-appointed crusaders of 'progress' will come into power they will lose no time in putting across their favourite notions and practices and doing their best to call into order a society that will be Muslim only ethnically and whose face will be

turned decisively towards the vulgar materialism of the West.

Intellectual Sterility

The religious skepticism and waywardness of the modern-educated classes of the Muslim World is, to a certain extent, due also to the intellectual decadence and inertia that has taken hold of the Islamic educational and literary institutions and their representatives. On account of it, the Islamic sciences, in spite of their innate vitality and dynamism, have not been successful in giving a convincing proof of their richness and ability to offer guidance to the ever-evolving life particularly during the modern days of ruthless competition and struggle. The syllabi of Islamic studies kept pace with life and went on developing with it in the earlier days when revolutionary upheavals were few and far between and almost of an identical nature. By and large, these convulsions were of a personal nature involving little more than a change of the ruler or the ruling dynasty. The formulators of the Islamic syllabi and other Muslim educationists, till then, remained active and alert and through making suitable changes in the courses prescribed for study they furnished a steady proof of their social awareness and keenness of mind. When, however, with the dawn of the 18th century a new era opened in the history of mankind and revolutions assumed a much wider social significance as clashes between different ideologies and programmes of life, the Islamic educational system, including the syllabi, grew cumbrous and became fossilised. In the prescribing of subjects, in the choice of books and in the methods of instruction, the line chalked down by Mulla Nizamuddin in India, or the eighteenth century Deans of Al-Azhar in the Middle East, was religiously adhered to by all as something sacrosanct and inviolable. The principle of *Ijtehad* was, for all practical purposes, forgotten. It was not employed any more to re-examine the structure of Islamic Jurisprudence and to revise and enlarge it in the light of the advancements made in human knowledge and from the point of view of the multitudinous problems thrown up by the new social

and economic experiences. Though hedged around by a number of highly important and delicate conditions, *Ijtehad* constituted a permanent duty of Islamic theologists, and since it embodied the principle of movement in Islam it was the most valuable instrument for keeping pace with time. As an eminent Arab Scholar, Mustafa Ahmad el-Zurqa, has remarked, "Though the ulema did not regard it as legally prohibited to open the door of *Ijtehad*, the key by which it could be opened had been lost long ago."

Efforts to explain and interpret the Islamic sciences, the Quranic teachings and the *Shariat* in a thoughtful and appealing manner and in a language and style that could conform with the modern intellectual and literary standards had become rare, if not extinct, and scholars who could make a lasting impression on the minds of the growing intelligentsia about the eternity of the message of Islam and its relevance to the hard realities of life, and, thus, shatter the magic spell of modern civilisation through their writings were, generally, not to be found.

Re-interpretation of Islamic Law

It is true that, occasionally, in different parts of the Muslim World there appeared religious figures of outstanding stature who, by dint of their wide learning and strength of character, wielded a strong influence over large sections of the *Millet* and saved them from the developing peril of intellectual apostasy. Isolated efforts were, also, made on an individual scale for the re-interpretation of Islamic law.[1] But the absence of an energetic world-wide movement was continuously felt which could forge a link between the modern educated Muslim youth and its spiritual and cultural heritage and instil a new life into Islamic sciences—a movement which could demonstrate to the world that the Islamic law was essentially a forward-looking

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1. Take, for instance, Mustafa Zarqa's *El-Madkhal-ul-Fiqhi el-A'm*, Mustafa, el-Sabai's *El-Ahwal-el-Shakhsiyat*, and Abu Zahra's articles on current problems.

institution, comprehensive as well as dynamic, and founded upon principles that could never become outworn or antiquated and, thus, fail at any time to meet the requirements of social change. In its presence it was absolutely unnecessary for Muslims to seek refuge in any artificial, man-made legal system. This, exactly, is the task before the Muslim World today and through it alone can it hope to protect itself against the threat of social and intellectual apostasy and to repulse the growing tide of Modernism and Westernisation. Iqbal has emphasised the importance and urgency of this work in these words :

> "I believe that anyone who will, in the modern Age, establish the immortality of Quranic teachings through a critical re-examination of Islamic jurisprudence will be the *Mujaddid* (Renovator) of Islam and the greatest servant of humanity. In nearly all the countries, today, Muslims are either fighting for their freedom or giving serious thought to Islamic law.........In brief, this is the time for constructive action, for, in my humble opinion, Islam now is being tested on the anvil of time, and, perhaps, such a fateful moment had never arrived before in the history of Islam."[1]

The re-interpretation of Islamic Jurisprudence does not mean the creation of a new legal structure for which fresh foundational principles may have to be evolved or something developed out of nothing. The Law of Islam is a unique achievement—a wonderful specimen of human resourcefulness and ingenuity, the like of which is not easy to find in the world. It comprehends a very large segment of life and can adequately deal with almost all the needs and circumstances that are the same today as they were in the ealier times. What is needed is to bring it uptodate by drawing fresh conclusions, with regard to the needs of contemporary life, from the fundamental principles derived solely from the Quran and the Traditions. To underline the comprehensiveness and superiority of the

1. *Iqbal Vama*, p.p. 50-51

Islamic legal system it would be advisable to reproduce the following from the appraisement attempted by a well-known jurist of Syria, Mustafa Ahmad el-Zarqa, on the basis of the views expressed by Western legists at a seminar held at the University of Paris in 1951 :

"The Oriental Jurisprudence branch of the International Academy of Contemporary Law organised an Islamic Jurisprudence Week, beginning from July 2I, 1951 at the Law College of the University of Paris. A Conference was held under the Presidentship of M. Milliot, Professor of Islamic Law at the Paris University, to which a large number of teachers in the Law Colleges of the non-Arab countries, representatives of the University of Azhar and Arab and French legists and scholars of Oriental studies were invited. Four delegates were sent to it by Egypt—two from the University of Fuad, one from the Law College of the University of Ibrahim and one from Azhar—while myself and Professor Maroof el-Dualibi represented the Law College of the University of Damascus. The five topics of Civil, Criminal and Revenue Law selected for discussion by the Academy were as follows :

(i) Proof of Title.
(ii) Requisition of Private Property by the State for Public Purpose.
(iii) Responsibility of Crime.
(iv) Influence of the *Ijtehad*[1] Schools of Thought on each-other ; and
(v) Islamic Point of View on Usury.

"All the proceedings were held in the French language. A day was allotted for each topic. After a paper had been read there took place a discussion between the speaker and the other delegates present, the duration of which depended upon the nature of the topic and the number of participating

1. *Ijtehad* in the terminology of Islamic Law means to exert with a view to form an independent judgement on a legal matter.

delegates. The proceedings of each session were duly recorded.

"During one of these discussions a delegate who was the President of the Bar Association of Paris got up and said, 'I do not know how to work up an adjustment between the popular belief that the Islamic law is static and out of joint with the spirit of the time and the opposite view which is emerging from the papers read and the discussion held at this Conference and on the strength of solid facts and premises'.

"At the end of the Conference a resolution was adopted unanimously which read :

'Whereas during the discussions at this Conference it has been established beyond doubt that :

'(i) The Islamic law possesses an irrefutable (legal and constitutional) value of its own.

'(ii) The differences existing among the various schools of *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence) in this great Juristic treasure-house offer a mine of information on legal principles, dialectics and syllogistic reasoning which is worthy of unqualified recognition. These differences have contributed to the richness of the Islamic law and have enabled it to deal with the problems arising out of the modern conditions of living.

'The Conference resolves that this week should be held every year and directs the Secretariat of the Conference to draw a list of subjects to be discussed at the next meeting, on the basis of their importance revealed in course of the present discussions'.

'The delegates, further, hope that a Committee will be set up to prepare a bibliography on Islamic Jurisprudence which will facilitate the work of referring to the books on Muslim Law and also serve the purpose of an Encyclopedia of *Fiqh* by containing all the information on Islamic legal history and structure along modern lines.' "[1]

1. *El-Madkhalul-Fiqhi-el-'A'am*, (1956)

Ray of hope

The modern-educated Muslims who by virtue of their education and upbringing and certain other qualities that are peculiar to the present age are in command of affairs in the Islamic countries today are not devoid of reasonableness and moral strength to accept the truth when they come to see it in spite of all the weaknesses and prejudices that have crept into them on account of their typical training and cultural and intellectual orientation. They, on the whole, are superior to many other classes of men where power of decision, resoluteness and hard, practical thinking are concerned. When they are convinced of the truth and justice of a thing they, generally, take it up with striking enthusiasm and energy. Many of them are sincerely devoted to Islam. They have given to the *Millet* some of its finest preachers, thinkers and crusaders. Not a few of religious and other Islamic movements are indebted to the modern or Western educated Muslims for some of their front-rank leaders, like Jamaluddin Afghani, Sheikh Mohammad Abduh and Sheikh Hasan el-Barna in the Middle East. In India a still larger number of such Muslims have come up to serve as guides and leaders from the time of the Khilafat movement to the present day.

If the preachers of the faith apply themselves seriously to bringing the modern educated Muslims nearer to Islam by straightening the curves that have appeared in their mental make-up as a result of their Western or West-oriented education and succeed in stirring the spark of faith that is lying buried in their hearts this class of Muslims can still produce leaders of thought and action of the calibre of Iqbal and Mohammad Ali. There can be no better service to the cause of Islam and the entire humanity in the present epoch than this. Its results are bound to be startling

Our religious divines, mentors and preachers must, therefore, concentrate earnestly on the correction and reform of the modern educated classes of Muslims. Without this it would be impossible to bring about any major change in the conditions

obtaining at present in the Muslim World. By their misplaced enthusiasm, caprice and waywardness these Muslims have landed the World of Islam in the abysmal depth of intellectual apostasy. They have, out of sheer cussedness and folly, turned its face from pure and unadulterated Islam towards the pure and unadulterated materialism of the West, and placed the poor and innocent Muslim masses at the mercy of an arrant un-Islamic leadership which is driving them like a helpless flock of cattle. It is through their reformation, alone, that Muslim lands can be made safe again for Islam.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PERMANENT ROLE OF THE MUSLIM WORLD

WE will now examine the third course that is open to the Muslim World.

It is not possible to determine the correct and balanced attitude the Islamic World should adopt in respect of the conflict between the Western Civilisation and Islam and Muslims without first enquiring into the natural disposition of the Muslim *Millat* and its true place and position in the present world and examining its fundamental outlook on life which gives rise to societies and civilisations

The Station of Ummat-i-Islamia and its Call

The Muslim community (*Ummat-i-Islamia*) is the bearer of the Last Message which controls all its deeds and actions. Its place is that of guidance and leadership and its mission is the superintendence of the world. The Quran has emphatically proclaimed:

> "Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind. Ye enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency; and Ye believe in Allah."
>
> —(iii : 110)

And, again:

> "Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be witnesses against mankind."
>
> —(ii : 143)

It is, therefore, out of the question for the Muslim *Millat* to be the camp-follower of any other community and to resign itself to submission and imitation. The likeness of its view-point is of an independent and strong-willed man of honour and chivalry who, according to his needs and circumstances, accepts from others, of his own will and discretion, things that go well with him and do not act to the detriment of his personality and self-confidence and rejects those which are not in keeping with his dignity or may be harmful to him. If is for this reason that the Muslims have been forbidden against adopting the distinguishing features and social and cultural practices of any other community.

The Muslims possess a definite purpose in life. They have a message for mankind and their culture and civilisation, endeavour and struggle and all other activities are subordinated to their creed and ideals. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge, power for the sake of power and unity for the sake of unity are meaninglesss concepts. The conquest of the forces of nature and the triumph of man over matter are nothing but sport and vanity, from the Islamic point of view, if it is intended only for the display of one's might or intellectual or material superiority. The Quran keeps the feelings and aspirations of the *Millat* in check through the following verse :

> "As for that abode of the Hereafter We assign it unto those who seek not oppression in the earth, nor yet corruption. The sequel is for those who ward off evil".
>
> —(xxviii : 83)

Strong, Well-Informed, Upright and Reforming Muslim

Islam allows, within proper limits, striving and endeavour in the path of life and knowledge provided that it is for a noble purpose and in the interest of mankind. In fact, it often encourages it for God has held up the example of the strong, well-informed upright and reforming Believer who subjugates the external physical forces and also amasses material means and resources and keeps on extending the area of his achievements

and conquests, but even at the height of his power and glory reposes his faith in God, bows down before Him with humility and believes in the Hereafter and strives for it; who acknowledges his helplessness, stands for justice and compassion for all men, specially the weaker nations, and devotes all his strength and capabilities towards the glorification of the name of the Lord and for the purpose of delivering humanity from darkness and inviting it from the overlordship of fellowmen to the bondage of the Almighty. This is the pattern of life and character that was symbolized by Soloman, Dhul Qarnain, the glorious Caliphs and the theological doctors of Islam during their life-time.

Life—A Prelude to the Hereafter

Islam does not regard the earthly life and the present world to be the highest goal of man and the pinnacle of his advancement. It is a transitional stage through which a man must pass for the fulfilment of his destiny. It is a means to greater felicity and a stepping stone to the never-ending life of cloudless bliss. Laying stress on the transitoriness of this world and its worthlessness as compared with Futurity.

The Quran says :

> "The comfort of the life of the world is but little as against the Hereafter."
>
> —(ix : 38)
>
> "This life of the world is but a pastime and a game. Lo! the home of the Hereafter—that is Life, if they but knew."
>
> —(xxix : 64)
>
> "Know that the life of this world (as compared with the Hereafter) is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children ; as the likeness of vegetation after rain, whereof the growth is pleasing to the husbandman, but afterward it drieth up and thou seest it turning yellow, then it becometh straw. And in the Hereafter there is grievous punishment, and (also) forgiveness from Allah and His

good pleasure, whereas the life of the world is but a matter of illusion."

—(lvii : 20)

The Quran asserts that the life of this world is the bridge of the Hereafter and an opportunity for action :

"Lo! We have placed all that is in the earth as an ornament thereof that We may try them, which of them is best in conduct".

—(xviii : 7)

"Who hath created life and death that He may try you, which of you is best in conduct; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving"..

—(lxvii : 2)

"The Hereafter is a better and more long-lasting reality. Naught is the life of the world save a pastime and a sport. Better far is the abode of the Hereafter for those who keep their duty (to Allah). Have ye then no sense?"

—(vi : 32)

"And whatsoever ye have been given is a comfort of the life of the world and an ornament thereof; and that which Allah hath is better and more lasting. Have ye then no sense?"

—(xxviii : 60)

The Quran condemns those who prefer this perishable, transitory, and imperfect world to the eternal and everlasting, unbounded and faultless Hereafter which is free from every kind of evil and meanness, grief and distress, fear and loss and disease and ill-health.

"Lo! Those who expect not the meeting with Us but desire the life of the world and feel secure therein, and those who are neglectful of Our revelations, their home will be the Fire because of what they used to earn".

—(x : 8-9)

"Whoso (only) desireth the life of the world and its pomp, We shall repay them their deeds herein, and therein

they will not be wronged.

"Those are they for whom there is naught in the Hereafter save the Fire. (All) that they contrive here is vain and (all) that they are wont to do is fruitless".

—(xi : 15-16)

"And woe unto the disbelievers from an awful doom; those who love the life of the world more than the Hereafter, and (debar) men from the way of Allah and would have it crooked : such are far astray".

—(xiv : 2-3)

"They know only some appearance of the life of the world, and are heedless of the Hereafter".

—(xxx : 7)

"Then withdraw (O Mohammad) from him who fleeth from Our remembrance and desireth only the life of the world. Such is their sum of knowledge. Lo.! Thy Lord is best aware of him who strayeth, and He is best aware of him who goeth right".

—(liii : 29-30)

"Lo! These love fleeting life, and put behind them (the remembrance of) a grievous day".

—(lxxvi : 27)

"Then as for him who rebelled, and close the life of the world, Lo! Hell will be his home".

—(lxxix : 37-39)

Praiseworthy is the man who, preferring the Hereafter and keeping it steadily in the mind, leads a successful life both in this world and the next.

"Our Lord! Give unto us in the world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and guard us from the doom of Fire".

(ii : 201)

Or, in the words of Moses :

"And ordain for us in this world that which is good, and in the Hereafter (that which is good); Lo! we have turned unto Thee". —(vii : 156)

Expressing approval of the conduct of Abraham, the Quran says:

"And We gave him good in the world, and in the Hereafter he is among the righteous".

—(xvi : 122)

The basic attitude of a Muslim towards the material world has been beautifully defined in the following dictum which forms a part of some of the friday sermons: "The world hath been created for thee and thou hath been created for the Hereafter." The Believer avails himself of worldly means and powers as if these have been subjugated to him, or, rather, the world has been created for his sake, and strives for the Hereafter as if he has been but created for it. He regards the world and all that it contains to be the mount, not the rider the slave, not the master, and the means, not the end. The Hereafter for him is the journey's end, the destination, towards which he has been sent. He looks upon it as the abode where he is to take shelter, and, consequently, harnesses his entire strength, bears all sorts of hardships and willingly and resolutely puts to work his capabilities for its sake. This is what the holy Prophet had sought to convey when he had said about himself that "my relation with the world is only this much that my likeness is of a rider who sat under the shade of a tree for a while and then got up and went away."[1]

The mode of expression of the Quran and the similitude regarding the attitude towards the life of the world is evident from the life of the sacred Prophet, his teachings, his feelings, his prayers and all his actions and doings, in private and in public. The lives of the holy Companions, who had received their training and education from him portray the same point of view and the Tabeen[2] and other men of faith, also, continued to uphold it truthfully.

It had become a part of their nature: this is a historical

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1. *Masnad-i-Ahmad* and *Tirmidhi*
2. The Muslims who followed the immediate Companions of the Prophet.

reality which cannot be disputed. It is the point at which the Divine faiths and the Apostolic teachings collide with materialistic thought and concepts which insist that this world is the whole thing, the final and exclusive aim and destination of humanity, and, therefore, are ready to go to any lengths in its glorification and to make it pleasant and comfortable.

The Rebel Civilisation which rejects Moral and Spiritual Values

Unfortunately enough, the Western Civilisation started coming into its own at a time when the European people had been compelled by self-seeking ecclesiastics, who had made religion an instrument of tyranny and self-aggrandisement, to raise the banner of revolt against the basic transcendental truths. The Christian Church had degenerated into a most powerful force of obduracy and reaction. Its guardians, by their ignorance, hideous sensuality and corruption, were proving to be the greatest stumbling block in the path of knowledge and progress. As a natural consequence of it all, a strong feeling of revulsion and disgust had developed throughout the Continent against the Church and its representatives. Religion had come to be looked down upon as a corrupting, degrading and retrogressive institution. Spiritual values had fallen into disrepute. From then on, civilisation, industrialisation and rank materialism began to march ahead in the West in close unison. It was resolved that life should be organised exclusively on materialistic lines without giving a thought to the spiritual personality of man or to the bond that existed between him and his Maker. All this was due, clearly, to the circumstances which prevailed in Europe at the time of the coming of age of the Western Civilisation. Once Western Civilisation had set out on its course it never looked back. It went on developing and expanding along the direction towards which it had set its face, conquering new forces of nature and exploring the hitherto unknown avenues of science and technology till even the barriers of time and space had lost their meaning and the people of the West had been

able to fly in outer space, to go round the world in briefest time and to bring off other spectacular achievements in the sphere of material advancement.

Modernists of the Muslim East

The mentality of downright materialism has spread, also, to the so-called modernised, or truer still, the West-worshipping leaders of the Muslim East. All of them, from Kemal to Gamal,[1] appear to be betwitched by Western Civilisation. These Muslim modernists, too, deify power and venerate progress at whose altar all moral and spiritual values and everything not materially useful must, of necessity, be sacrificed.

The speeches and writings of contemporary Muslim leaders, as, also, their actions and the treatment they portion out to those who are critical of their imitative zeal, leave no one in doubt about their West-inspired and predominantly materialistic thinking and philosophy. Even a cursory examination of their projects and policies will show how they have made material progress the sole article of faith with themselves. Before them there is no other objective than the improvement of the standard of living in their countries and their admission into the 'select' fraternity of nations which are innocent of everything beyond the appeasement of the five senses, whose only gods are power and worldly advancement and with which only communities that have a political alliance with them are reliable and deserving of esteem. Such an attitude of the mind has always been a curse for mankind. It has plunged the world again and again into the depths of misery and disaster. Religions have waged a crusade against this bigoted, warped and sickly mentality. Islam, too, is deadly opposed to it. It is a sign of mental debasement for the leaders of a Muslim country to adopt it and a proof of their inner insolvency, defective upbringing and timidity and cowardliness, and a source of colossal misfortune for that country, and, through it, the whole world.

1. Meaning Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt

The eagerness for the protection of one's Islamic personality and of the role and position of the Muslim *Millet* in the world, the awareness of its call and message and the insistence on the Hereafter and on the moral and spiritual aspect of worldly existence—these are the things that separate the two civilisations from each other. On one side, there is a civilisation whose springhead is Islam and in which self-realisation and the dignity of Islamic individuality find their due expression. On the other, there is a civilisation about which Islam has said that it will have nothing to do with it and from which no good can ever accrue to Muslims. This civilisation is symbolic of mental servitude and imitativeness.

Test of Wisdom and Will Power

To give rise to a civilisation, to evolve it through all its stages and to determine its form and content is the test of a people's wisdom, courage, determination and religious understanding. It is, by no means, merely a matter of adaptation, correction and reform. Islam has defined clearly the limits of what is good, wholesome and legitimate, beyond which it is not proper for us to go but within which there is a vast scope for the enjoyment of life in a clean and decent manner provided that we are guilty neither of wastefulness and extravagance nor of miserliness and greed and do not transgress against the rights of others or go in for sensuous gratification to the extent of exposing ourselves to the machinations of the Devil. In brief, Islam wants us to lead a full and happy life but not of a type which is destructive of the noble and manly attributes of human character. This spirit runs through the entire structure of Islamic Civilisation including such personal departments of life as food and dress. Islam stands for the pursuit of the good and the beneficial and for prudent watchfulness against what is corrupt and injurious. It allows the cultivation of material strength to the highest degree and the acquirement of all the salutary and edifying knowledge in the world subject to the condition that it does not weaken the foundations of human personality or impair

the healthy growth of Islamic nationality or breed a sense of inferiority and slavish imitation of others.

Hard as Steel, Soft as Silk

Such is the foundational structure of Islamic Civilisation. It possesses both, the hardness of steel and the softness of silk. In the domains of faith and morality it is firm and unyielding but where culture and learning and the evolving realities of life are concerned it is equally mild and flexible. It is not irresponsive to social change. It is a large-hearted and broadminded civilisation which is ready to learn from others anything that does not cut across its own fundamental beliefs and ideals.

The real field of Learning from the West – And its limits

Relevant to the present discussion is the following passage from Mohammad Asad in which he has very ably indicated the lines along which the Muslim World can and should learn from and profit by the West, particularly in the spheres of modern sciences and technology. It reads :

> "Never before..... ....have the worlds of Islam and the West come so close to one another as today. This closeness is both, visible and invisible. Under the impact of Western cultural influences, the souls of many Muslim men and women are shrivelling. They are letting themselves be led away from their erstwhile belief that an improvement should be but a means to improving man's spiritual perceptions ; they are falling into the same idolatry of 'progress' into which the Western world fell after it reduced religion to a mere melodious tinkling somewhere in the background of happening ; and are thereby growing smaller in stature, not greater ; for all cultural imitation, opposed as it is to creativeness, is bound to make a people small.........
>
> "Not that the Muslims could not learn much from the West, specially in the fields of science and technology. But

the acquisition of scientific notions and methods is not really 'imitation'; and certainly not in the case of a people whose faith commands them to search for knowledge wherever it is to be found. Science is neither Western nor Eastern, for all scientific discoveries are only links in an unending chain of intellectual endeavour which embraces mankind as a whole. Every scientist builds on the foundations supplied by his predecessors, be they of his own nation or of another; and this process of building, correcting and improving goes on and on, from man to man, from age to age, from civilisation to civilisation, so that the scientific achievements of a particular age or civilisation can never be said to 'belong to that age or civilisation.' At various times one nation, more vigorous than others, is able to contribute more to the general fund of knowledge; but in the long run the process is shared, and legitimately so, by all. There was a time when the civilisation of the Muslims was more vigorous than the civilisation of Europe. It transmitted to Europe many technological inventions of a revolutionary nature, and more than that: the very principles of that 'scientific method' on which modern science and civilisation are built. Nevertheless, Jabir ibn Hayyan's fundamental discoveries in chemistry did not make chemistry an 'Arabian' science; nor can algebra and trigonometry be described as 'Muslim' sciences, although the one was evolved by Al-Khwarizmi and the other by Al-Battani, both of whom were Muslims: just as one cannot speak of an 'English' theory of Gravity, although the man who formulated it was an Englishman. All such achievements are the common property of the human race. If, therefore, the Muslims adopt, as adopt they must, modern methods in science and technology they will do no more than follow the evolutionary instinct which causes men to avail themselves of other men's experiences. But if they adopt as there is no need for them to do—Western forms of life, Western manners and customs and social concepts, they will not gain thereby: for what the West can give them in

this respect will not be superior to what their own culture has given them and to what their own faith points the way.

"If the Muslims keep their heads cool and accept progress as a means and not as an end in itself, they may not only retain their own inner freedom but also, perhaps, pass on to the Western man the lost secret of life's sweetness..."[1]

Greatest Void

The greatest vacuum obtaining in the Muslim World today is that of leadership. Not one man is to be found anywhere—earnest, zealous and deep-hearted—who can face the challenge of Western Civilisation with faith, courage and imagination and chalk out a new course of thought and action which may be free from intellectual and cultural servility as well as extremism, and who without getting involved aimlessly in the superficial manifestations of the Western way of life can concentrate directly on substance and reality. An ideal man, a genius who can give to his people a new lead based, on the one side, on faith which is the legacy of the Apostles and religion which was revealed to Muslims through the sacred Prophet, and, on the other, on knowledge which is universal and does not belong to any particular age or community. A leader worthy of Islam and Muslims who may derive inspiration from the Divine faith which is the most valuable asset in the service of mankind and in the evolution of civilisation, and, at the same time, exploit, to the fullest advantage, the enormous material means and resources the West has developed after centuries of sustained endeavour but which have not yet been put to proper use due to want of moral and spiritual discipline and are being employed foolishly and callously for the annihilation of mankind and the obliteration of all that is good and noble in life. A lofty-minded man of resoluteness and wisdom who can treat as raw material the culture, civilisation, vitality and inventiveness of the West for

1. The Road to Mecca, pp. 347-49

erecting a new and mighty structure of life which may be representative of faith, morality, compassion, righteousness, justice and the typical Western spirit of enterprise, creativeness and originality. A leader of renovation and renaissance who may not proceed from the assumption that the Western Civilisation has attained the ultimate stage of progress and perfection, the seal of finality has been set on it and now there is no option for anyone but to accept it *in toto*, with all its faults and imperfections. On the contrary, he should scrutinise it, bit by bit, accepting what he likes and rejecting what he does not, and, then, evolve a pattern of life which is in harmony with his own ideals and aspirations and whose roots may be going down deep into the discipline of life, the particular outlook on the world and the distinctive attitude towards humanity and the overpowering solicitude for After-life which are the hall-marks of Islam so that from it may stem forth life about which the Quran has furnished the following testimony:

> "Whosoever doeth right, whether male or female, and is a believer, him, verily, We shall quicken with good life, and We shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do." (-el-Nahl: 97)

A pattern of living based on faith in the holy Prophet that he is the eternal mentor and guide of mankind, its ideal specimen and beloved master and that the *Shariat* he brought is not only the soundest and the most natural source of legislation but, also, a whole programme of life which alone holds the key to felicity in this life as well as the next. Apart from it, no other design of life is acceptable to God.

A wise and forward-looking leader who may borrow the empirical sciences from the West—which, in fact, are neither Western nor Eastern and possess a practical utility for his people—and shake-off from these sciences the dirt that has got stuck to them as a painful reminder of the dreary conflict during the Dark Ages between the Church and the rising intelligentsia of Europe; who can remove the chaff from the grain and purge the useful branches of learning of agnosticism, prejudice

and other misconceptions and instil into them the spirit of faith and, thereby, produce results far ahead of where the West has stopped and,also,much more beneficial to mankind.

A man who may not make the West his preceptor and relegate himself to the rank of a pupil or gleaner but treat it as an associate and a fellow-traveller who, on account of certain circumstances, has stolen a march over him and whose achievements he now has to re-evaluate in the light of the knowledge bequeathed to him by the holy Apostle and to make his own contribution. He ought to know that if he has to learn a great deal from the West, the West, too, has to learn no less from him and what he can give to the West is far more superior to what the West has to offer. His endeavour should be to bring about a synthesis between the material and the spiritual forces of the West and the East respectively and then to evolve from it a way of life the West may also be compelled to adopt and which may serve as an inspiration to the most highly advanced nations of the present-day world.

This is the portrait of an earnest and high-minded leader of a Muslim country or of the Islamic World but, unfortunately, it cannot be claimed even for one man today that he bears resemblance to it so much so that what we have said will seem to be pure wishful thinking to the reader. Before a man of this stature the modern parasitic and imitative leaders of the Muslim countries will look like pygmies. None of the leaders the Islamic countries have thrown up during this century come anywhere near the standard we have indicated nor can anyone among them be expected to fill the vacuum of leadership which has become the most lamentable reality of the contemporary times. As Iqbal has said :

> Neither in Mustafa[1] nor in Raza Shah does it dwell,
> The soul of the East still is in quest of a body.

Role of Islamic Countries

At a time like this when the Western Civilisation seems to

1. Ataturk

have attained the highest stage of its evolution and the Islamic countries, because of their peculiar circumstances and reasons of history, cannot hope to participate in it on terms of equality, and, even if it were possible to adopt such a course, it would neither be wise nor proper for them to do so for it would mean the end of all the things they cherish and hold precious in life, their faith, their ideals and their distinctive way of individual and social existence, there is open to them an avenue of endeavour which leads neither to slavery and imitation nor to denial and isolation. To pursue it with all their might and sincerity will be both safe and honourable for Muslims. It will not only be in keeping with their destiny and natural role in the world but also be regarded as the most revolutionary step of the modern age and the greatest and most sacred undertaking of the time. It consists of the guidance of the modern civilisation itself, its rejuvenation and reorientation and its enrichment with Apostolic faith and with basic human tenderness and compassion. The duty of guidance and correction of the Western Civilisation can be discharged only by the Muslims but, as a first step, they will have to shed their sickly obsessions and moral and cultural consequences of centuries of political enslavement and intellectual inertia and degeneration. They will have to take stock of their situation and analyse the causes of their present plight before they can seal off the sources of the skeptical beliefs and inclinations that are corroding their cultural and spiritual heritage and making them an easy prey to the corrupting influences of the West. In the place of the Western workshops of the mind and the heart the Muslims will have to set up their own Islamic workshops and to give themselves a new set of values and standards which will be fully integrated to their past as also to the challenges of the modern times. By its very nature the task is both original as well as derivative, critical as well as creative, but it will have to be taken in hand in all seriousness since the raising up of a new generation in the Islamic World, marked by the qualities of courage, self-confidence and enterprise, is dependent on it.

EPILOGUE

THE World of Islam is passing through a crisis of confidence. However unpalatable it may be, the truth remains that the qualities of self-awareness and self-assurance are not the distinguishing features of Muslims in any part of the world today. Even the Muslim countries that are free (no matter whether they have been free for centuries or attained freedom only recently) are intellectually and educationally subservient to the West. The rulers of these countries often show commendable courage, even to the extent of incurring grave risks, in the political field but where the cultural, intellectual and educational questions come up they betray an awful lack of freedom of judgement. But, it is an accepted fact that cultural and intellectual servility is much more harmful and degrading than political serfdom. Once a country has passed under the cultural and intellectual domination of another it becomes unnecessary for the latter to annex it politically. Further, since in the modern world the conquest and annexation of one country by another has no longer remained possible the Big Powers are getting inclined to concentrate, more and more, on strengthening their cultural and intellectual hold over the weaker nations instead of seeking their political subjugation.

If there could be any power in the present-day world which could challenge the cultural and intellectual supremacy of the West and its resulting ideological domination it was the World of Islam with its own distinctive personality, its characteristic programme of life and its soul-stirring moral and spiritual appeal, but, unfortunately, owing to the reasons enumerated in

detail by the Author in an earlier book[1], the Muslims have lapsed into such a state of powerlessness and disorder that they can offer little resistance to the growing influence of the West. In addition to it, the Western nations are taking due care to dissipate what little of moral and spiritual awareness and vitality is left in them through a number of well-calculated steps, some of which bear the stamp of innocence and magnanimity while others are openly hostile and vicious. Even the patronage of institutions like the UNESCO is proving detrimental to the interests of Islam in the Muslim countries in many ways. The moral and spiritual stamina of Muslims is being continuously sapped, sometimes through the generous supply of foreign teachers, researchers, social workers and technocrats, sometimes through a liberal provision of the wrong kind of literature which can only disturb the peace of mind and encourage doubt and disbelief by arousing in them what is the worst in man, and, sometimes, through the launching of campaigns like the popularisation of TV in the name of raising the standard of living and making life more worthwhile. Often open-handed economic or military aid is made available to the developing countries, and, in return, they are compelled to enforce such changes or to set into operation such schemes as are positively inimical to the Islamic temperament and can only lead to the disintegration of the Muslim pattern of living. In brief, while apparently keeping away, the West has thrown such a powerful ring around the Muslim countries and created such conditions in them that these sovereign and independent nations are now caught more firmly in its grip than they were in the bygone days of naked Imperialism.

Ironically enough, the rulers of the Islamic World, some of whom never tire of posing before their peoples as the champions of Muslim regeneration or advocates of a separate Islamic block are, themselves, displaying much greater enthusiasm in the implementation of these changes than the Western crusaders of

1. **Islam and the World** (1959)

'modernisation' and 'reform' in the East. The undiscerning manner in which the educational and other so-called progressive experiments made in the Soviet Union or America are being pushed through in the Muslim countries, the unbridled freedom that has been given to the Western experts to draw out programmes of fundamental change in the thinking and disposition of Muslims, the way unlimited opportunities are being provided for indigenous pupils of the Western Orientalists to sow the seeds of skepticism and discord in Muslim society and the recklessness with which the inclination towards luxuriousness and self-indulgence is being fostered and encouragement given to trends like co-education, the abolition of the *purdah* system and the free inter-mixing of the sexes drive one seriously to doubt if these leaders are not deliberately functioning as the tools of the West in its destructive designs and trying purposely to pervert the minds of their people in order to deprive them of the religious pride and moral sentiment which can any day pose a threat to their leadership by blossoming into a powerful force of Islamic revival. It is evident that if the process of 'change' and 'reform' is allowed to continue for some time and the forces of moral degradation and anarchy are left free to work themselves out, the rising generations in the Muslim countries would have drifted so far away from their spiritual moorings that no urge would be left in them to strive against the mounting pressures of Modernism and Westernisation. Among the new generations that are being exposed more and more to values and concepts imported wholeheartedly from the West the process of cultural, moral and intellectual de-Islamisation has already begun, and as this process will gather momentum the moral leprosy which has become the bane of the Western society will inevitably make a thorough conquest of the Islamic countries as well, and, then, there will remain not a single healthy and healthful society in the World which can hold out hope for the moral and spiritual resuscitation of mankind.

So far as the West is concerned it can never be genuinely sincere or sympathetic towards the Islamic countries. Its

malevolence is, partly, the outcome of history with the memories of the Crusades and the bloody and long-drawn strifes between the Ottoman Empire and the European nations still fresh in its mind, and, partly, dictated by commonsense for the Muslim World alone possesses the potential strengh and capability to constitute a danger to the universal ascendancy of the West or to confront the world with a new power block based on a different philosophy of life and a call that transcends the limitations of race and geography. It is strengthened, further, by the realisation of the worth and importance of the vast mineral wealth and other resources lying within the frontiers of the Muslim World which can be of a decisive consequence to the West, both economically and politically. And, finally, there is the traditional weakness of the human nature that when a person is afflicted with an incurable disease he, sometimes, begins to derive a sort of morbid satisfaction from the desire that the others also became like him so that there could be nothing to distinguish the healthy from the sick. Only those can remain immune from this failing or overcome it successfully who are endowed with a genuine fear of God and love for humanity, but these noble qualities can be developed in a man only through the teachings of the holy Prophets. This wealth was, sadly, lost by the West centuries ago. The entire history of its rise shows that the countries that came under its sway could scarcely save themselves from catching the infection of moral debasement the Western empire-builders invariably carried. As some of the more honest and objective Western scholars themselves have admitted, movements for the propagation of agnostic ideas have deliberately been set afloat by Western Imperialists in the Eastern countries as a part of their political policy. However apathetic the West may be towards Christianity and to whatever limits of irreligiousness its craze for rationalism and freethinking may have reached at home, all its broadmindedness and liberality of outlook evaporates into thin air when it comes to the World of Islam. The Christian West can forgive the Jews, but not the Muslims. The

anti-Muslim sentiment has become a part of its being. Innumerable instances can be cited to show that in the event of a quarrel between a Muslim and a non-Muslim country the West took the side of the non-Muslim country either openly or through subterfuge. The recent Arab-Israel war has proved conclusively that no Muslim state or community can afford to rely on the friendship of a Western Power. Muslims must learn to depend on God and on their own strength alone in whatever they do.

The leaders of the Muslim countries ought to realise that whatever good the reckless imitation of the West may do to them for the time being it will ultimately rock the foundations of the Islamic *Millat* and bring it to ruin.

In spite of all their faults and shortcomings, the vital religious feeling, the readiness to suffer in the cause of God and the spirit of earnestness, fidelity and love that have become extinct among the materialistic nations of the West can still be seen in the Islamic countries. The Muslim peoples, their appalling ignorance and backwardness notwithstanding, are the raw material from which the finest models of humanity can be made. Their greatest asset is their faith and their simplicity, earnestness and enthusiasm. In the past, Muslims have worked wonders by drawing upon these matchless reservoirs of power and, in moments of crisis, it is these very qualities that have come to the rescue of the Islamic countries. Even from the purely utilitarian point of view, the rulers of the Muslim countries should appreciate the latent spiritual vitality of their people and regard it as the most valuable instrument for the defence of national freedom and solidarity which can also enable them to play a role worthy of their great past on the stage of history. But, thanks to the all-pervading curse of Westernisation, the Muslim masses are being robbed of their spiritual vitality and are developing a moral cancer against which nothing can avail.

Taking into consideration the irrefutable educational and industrial superiority of the West, there are only two courses open

to Muslims. One is that they make a complete submission to it, accept its philosophy of life, its concept of the universe and its spiritual convictions and ethical standards *in toto* and try to cast their entire existence into its mould. But such a course can, apart from the fact that it will amount to gross apostasy, moral and intellectual hara-kiri and shameless betrayal of humanity whose only hope of redemption rests with this very community, raised up as it was, by the last of the Prophets, end up only in relentless bloodshed and chaos within the Islamic fraternity. It would be like pulling down a well-conditioned building in the absurd hope of raising upon its ruins a structure for which neither the right kind of skill nor building material is available and which would neither be suited to the climate of the place nor be in harmony with the environment. Whenever such an attempt has been made in the Islamic World it has resulted in failure. The Muslim masses have rejected it firmly as soon as an opportunity to freely express their opinion has come their way. The same thing is happening in Turkey today and going to happen soon in Syria and Iraq too.

The other course for the Muslims lies in making the fullest use of the physical sciences and technology of the West by learning them wholeheartedly and then subordinating them by means of their own intelligence and industry to the lofty purposes which the last of the holy Prophets has bequeathed to them and by virtue of which they have won the distinction of being proclaimed as the 'Best of the People'. This happy co-ordination between the ends and means from the absence of which both the West and the East are suffering at present can alter the destiny of the world. It can save it from impending annihilation and put it firmly on the road to all-round progress and felicity. The West has all the resources in the world but it is devoid of a healthy sense of purpose ; the (Muslim) East is endowed with the soundest of aims and ideals but is very backward materially. As we have said earlier, this laudable task can be accomplished by no other people than the Muslims who are the successors of the last of the Apostles and the sole inheritors of his Message. The

slogan of the Muslims, all over the world, should now be :

The tyranny of the West has laid the world to waste,
Arise, O Architect of *Harem*,[1] to build it anew.

A bold and enterprising country of the East, namely, Japan has shown us the way, although in a limited, and, from the stand-point of Islam, most imperfect manner. Japan learnt the material sciences and technology from the West and acquired mastery over them,and, at the same time, it held fast to its spiritual background and cultural heritage. But, unfortunately, its religious creed and civilisation are such that they cannot keep abreast of time or fulfil the need of a universal message. The Japanese culture is only an amalgam of antiquated beliefs and out-worn traditions. It is a miracle of the will-power and loyalty to the past of its people that modern Japan is still clinging to it. With Islam, on the other hand, it is wholly different. It stands for a faith, a *Shariat* and a law for which the term 'ancient' and 'modern' have no meaning, and a civilisation whose roots are embedded in imperishable truths. Like an evergreen tree it is always young and ready to send forth new blossoms. Hence, in the Muslim countries the integration between modern sciences and the fundamental teachings of Islam can be worked out without any serious difficulty and its impact will also be much more revolutionary and extensive than what we have experienced in Japan. In a tradition-bound country an attempt like this is bound to be self-defeating. For a Muslim, however, there need be no contradiction in it, for, according to him, correct religion and correct knowledge do not pull in opposite directions or stand in the way of each other. Knowledge, says a Tradition of the sacred Prophet, is the lost property of a Muslim and he is its rightful owner. From the Muslim view-point, it is the end for which a means is employed that determines whether it is good or bad. The true purpose of all knowledge, power and other worldly resources and acquirements is that they serve the cause of the Divine faith and help to promote the genuine welfare of

1. The House of Ka'aba at Mecca

mankind. It is the duty of a Muslim to see that these precious gifts of God are not misused. To take them out of the wrong place and to put them in the right place and to assure that they are employed for constructive ends is a matter of moral responsibility with them.

But Muslims can discharge the sacred obligation only when they are able to produce in themselves that strength of faith and courage of conviction and skill and sincerity which can repulse the onslaught of glittering catchwords and the prevalent imitative tendency and overcome the petty considerations of immediate gain, both individual and collective. For this their leaders, too, will have to make the necessary sacrifices, but, even from the personal point of view these sacrifices will not be in vain for, by virtue of them, they will rise tremendously in the estimation of their people, and it will also become possible for them, and, through them, for their countries, to play the sublime role of guidance and leadership they could never dream of.

The Western civilisation is doomed. It has become rotten to the core, and if it is still surviving it is not at all due to its latent qualities of strength and endurance but because no other civilisation is at present ready to take its place. The other civilisations in the world are, at the utmost, its own hazy carbon copies or third class caricatures or they are so weak and decrepit that it is beyond their power and ability to stand against it, face to face. Now, if a Muslim country or the World of Islam, as a whole, can muster enough strength and competence to fill the void that is going to be created by the fall of the Western Civilisation it can re-establish its claim to the leadership of mankind which, according to the unchanging practice of the Lord, always goes to those that are earnest, deephearted and resolute. The Muslims, therefore, ought to decide whether it is more honourable to approach the West with a begging bowl or assume the exalted position of the stewardship and guidance of humanity more than which there is no greater glory in the world after Apostleship. Does the sacrifice of worldly renown, power and wealth count for anything before it? Even if a man possessed

a hundred lives and had to lay down all of them for the sake of it, the bargain would not be bad.

Let us, now, see which Muslim country comes forward to take up the gauntlet and carries out this gigantic mission in comparison with which the mighty events of the past, such as, the European renaissance or the French and the Soviet revolutions must fade into insignificance for the forces of peace, progress and freedom it will release will not remain confined to the Islamic countries alone but sweep across the world and give a fresh lease of life to the dying humanity. Only those people or com munities can respond to this call which are bound in allegiance to the *Millat* of Ibrahim and for whom the choicest Quranic tidings and appellations of the 'Last of Divine Faiths' and 'the Termination of the Line of Holy Apostles' were meant. Today, the 'Song of Eternity' for the leaders of the Islamic World is the same which the Muslims had heard long, long ago, at the dawn of Islam:

> And strive for Allah with the endeavour which is His right. He has chosen you and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship, the faith of your father Abraham is (yours). He has named you Muslims (those who have surrendered unto Him) of old times and in this (scripture) that the messenger may be witness against you, and that you may be witness against mankind. So, establish worship, pay poor-tax, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protecting Friend; the best of Patrons and the best of Helpers.
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> (Quran : XXII : 78)

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THE END